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*Alinari, Florence*

LAVABO. INNER SACRISTY. S. LORENZO, FLORENCE

*Face p. 73*

VERROCCHIO







*Alinari, Florence*

SUPPOSED PORTRAIT OF ANDREA VERROCCHIO. BY LORENZO  
DI CREDI. UFFIZI, FLORENCE

*Frontispiece*

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# VERROCCHIO

BY

MAUD CRUTTWELL



LONDON: DUCKWORTH AND CO.  
NEW YORK: CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS

1904

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Nec tibi, Lysippe, est Thuseus Verrocchius impar  
A quo, quidquid habent pictores, fonte biberunt.  
Discipulos poene edocuit Verrocchius omnes,  
Quorum nunc volitat Thyrrhene per oppida nomen.

UGOLINO VERINO. "De Illustratione Urbis  
Florentiæ." 1636. Lib. II.

El chiaro fonte  
de humanidade e innata gentileza  
che ala pictura et ala sculptura e un ponte  
sopra del quale se passa cum destrezza  
l'alto Andrea del Verrocchio . . .

GIOVANNI SANTI. "Rime."



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## PREFATORY

VERROCCHIO is perhaps the least known and appreciated of the great masters of the fifteenth century. The supreme excellence of those works which are proved by documentary evidence to be authentic is disregarded as the standard of judgment as to quality and style, and a quantity of inferior sculpture and painting is attributed to him for which his feeble imitators are responsible. No quattrocento artist, with the exception of Donatello, exercised so strong or so prolonged an influence on Florentine art; but unfortunately the greater part of those so influenced were impressed only by certain daring innovations, and were incapable of understanding his true aims and ideals. These aims were first and foremost scientific; his ideals, to present with absolute truth the human form in its fullest perfection, not only of physical strength (as was the case with Andrea del Castagno and Antonio Pollaiuolo, the chiefs of the so-called Naturalistic School) but of noble and intellectual beauty. Strength and beauty of structure, freedom and grace of movement, subtle expression of emotion, were to be presented only by thorough knowledge of anatomy, and of the technique of brush and chisel. To acquire this knowledge Verrocchio devoted his life and genius, and with complete success. His acquaintance with anatomy and the

laws of movement, his draughtsmanship and technical skill in the various arts he employed, excelled that of any of his contemporaries, and with an impeccable accuracy in representation, and a vigorous and facile execution, he combined the poetry, the depth of feeling and the wide sympathies of the idealist. His interpretation of the charm of childhood in the Putto with the Dolphin, of vigorous youth in the David, of the superb force of manhood in the Colleoni, embodies in each phase of life its highest development. Yet this scientific and poetic artist has been so little studied that the most trivial and ignorant work is attributed to him, work which in feeling and in style is directly opposed to his own. He is so little appreciated that he is constantly condemned as "narrow and bourgeois,"\* and his work as "commonplace, angular, and dry."

In the following study an attempt has been made to show upon what dubious evidence the attribution to Verrocchio of such work as the Tornabuoni Relief and other inferior sculpture and painting is based, to trace his steady development from the immature work of the Baptism to the full burst of his powers in the statue of the Colleoni, and to arrive at a truer estimate of his artistic capabilities by the rejection of all inferior work, the attribution of which is merely hypothetical, taking as the standard of judgment only such works as are proved beyond possibility of doubt to be authentic. By such sifting of spurious evidence, and guided by the high level of his proved work, a clean sweep of all the feeble and

\* "Verrocchio est avant tout un esprit limité et un caractère bourgeois" (Müntz). Une Education d'Artiste au XV<sup>e</sup> siècle, "Revue des Deux Mondes," 1887, p. 660.

mediocre productions attributed to him can be made, which leaves us free to rank Verrocchio as one of the greatest masters of the Quattrocento, inferior to none of his contemporaries in scientific accuracy and technical ability, in breadth of vision and imaginative power only to Donatello and Leonardo.



## CHAPTER I

### VERROCCHIO AND HIS PLACE IN QUATTROCENTO ART

To present a study of a Florentine painter or sculptor of the fifteenth century without reference to Donatello would be as impossible as to ignore Dante in a treatise on Italian literature. Donatello was the pioneer, the guide, who with his wide vision and technical ability immensely in advance of his epoch, appears almost miraculously to have reached the summit of perfection without tedious climbing. His genius enabled him to play with form, to render with facility the supple elasticity of limb, to catch and carve in marble transient movements, to interpret the most complicated character and subtle emotions, in an age when his contemporaries had hardly yet freed themselves from the stiffness of Byzantine tradition. He seems instinctively rather than by laborious effort to have arrived at his consummate knowledge of the human frame and the laws of movement; and it remained for his pupils to work out the path step by step, by careful investigation and patient study, before the like amount of proficiency could be attained.

Giotto, the first realist of Renaissance Art, had already implanted the germ of those specific qualities of the Florentine School by which it takes precedence over every

other—its faithful presentation of the human form, and its interpretation of character and emotion. He was the first who gave substance and reality to painted form, the first who opened inwards the flat surface of wall and panel, and within the space so created set solid and substantial figures, the first who represented natural objects for their own sake. Before him painting was mere emblematic imagery, symbolism and decoration its highest aims. No words demonstrate so clearly the achievements of Giotto in realistic representation as the instructive proximity of the two Altarpieces, his and the so-called “Cimabue” of the Florence Accademia. The Virgin of “Cimabue,” gorgeous, idol-like, symbolises the Church’s majesty; that of Giotto, less magnificent, less hieratic, represents Humanity at its noblest. The art of the Byzantine School was invaluable for the didactic purposes of the Church. It dazzled the imagination by its splendour, it made no appeal to the senses: its very abstraction from humanity gave it a mysterious solemnity. To fascinate and awe was the limit of the painter’s aim, and this he achieved completely. Symbolic and religious art reached its culminating point in the gorgeous Altarpieces of the early Sieneſe.

With the first attempt to construct the human form as it actually exists, to give reality and substance to painted objects, the vision of the artist expanded. The construction of the body enthralled him as he began to comprehend its complexities and marvels. All his efforts were directed towards a thorough understanding, an accurate presentation, and with success new visions appeared. With the correct modelling of the face, with the correct movement of the limbs, came the possibility of making them express the emotions of the mind. Interests so absorbing left no place

for minor considerations. Art was no longer content with her subordinate place. She asserted her independence and claimed the right to work for her own ends ; to depict, not abstract images for a limited *culte*, but Humanity itself with its intricacies of physical construction and its emotional and intellectual complexities.

The secularisation of art which inevitably followed on this new development was gradual and apparently unintentional on the part of the artist. Giotto remained to the last scrupulously faithful to traditional representation in type and composition, and attempted no innovation in his illustration of the Church's themes. In the Madonnas of the Accademia it is difficult to realise that the immense difference between the two lies only in Giotto's truer presentation of form, that in composition and in detail there is but little variation on that of "Cimabue."

Up to this day no painter has equalled Giotto in the rendering of solidity of form. His figures give the impression of weight and pressure greater even than we receive from actual life, and possess by this quality the importance of all massive and colossal things. We are impressed by their stateliness and solemnity as by Egyptian sculpture. But though he possessed to an unrivalled degree this power of presenting the solidity of form, Giotto understood little or nothing of the hidden structure of the body. His representation of movement, the articulation of joint and the action of limb, remained always most elementary. His chief service to realistic art was the indication of the solidity of form beneath the draperies, it remained for a later generation to indicate the structure of muscle and bone.

But Giotto was a hundred years ahead of his time, and

although his style was immediately imitated and a certain realisation of substantial form became the rule in Florentine art and with such of the Sienese as felt his influence, no disciple yet appeared with sufficient force to develop or even to comprehend his achievements. The Gaddi, the Lorenzetti, even Andrea Pisano and Orcagna, were content to imitate, without effort towards a better knowledge of the human form. They were Giottesque, with the little additional technical facility that years of practice had lent. For nearly three-quarters of a century this apparent stagnation lasted; then, as though the development had all the time been pursuing a hidden course, with a rapidity which seems miraculous, the climax of perfection in the representation of the body was attained. Donatello in sculpture, Masaccio in painting, realised all for which Giotto strove, and more than he could have imagined. To them the most hidden secrets of the human structure were revealed, and the knowledge seemed to have come to them instinctively and without effort, for in none of their existing work is there any sign of tentative groping, still less of failure. Donatello's knowledge of human anatomy, his mastery of the most difficult technical problems, the perfection to which he brought the art of sculpture, remain a marvel and a mystery.

It is true that Donatello was not alone in the sudden advance of Florentine art. Jacopo della Quercia, Nanni di Banco, Ghiberti and Masolino, all his seniors by a few years, had achieved much, but all were artistically and intellectually his inferiors. Over all his contemporaries he strides like a Colossus. Only one name can be coupled with his as in any way his equal—Masaccio—and Masaccio was his junior and received impulse from him. His early

death prevented any rivalry between painting and sculpture in directing the course of Florentine art, but his few surviving works prove that his genius and technical skill fell but little below that of Donatello.

Donatello, one of the most representative figures of the Renaissance, one of the most comprehensive interpreters of its many-sided activities, gave visible form to the ideals of the newly awakened intellect. He is of equal importance in the general movement as in his special path; for he embodied in his sculpture, as did Michelangelo later, the intellectual progress of the most strenuous epoch of modern times. By his thorough knowledge and technical ability he was able to interpret in marble and bronze its visions of life and humanity—visions universal, splendid and varied. The beauty and dignity of outward life, of physical power and self-reliance, all the exuberant sensuousness of Pagan ethics which had replaced mediæval asceticism, were embodied by him in his sculptures, as well as the emotions and passions of the mind.

The special direction given to Florentine art under the lead of Donatello was the development of realistic representation, the truthful portrayal of humanity, not typical and ideal as conceived by the Greek artist, but personal and complete, the individual with his physical and psychological peculiarities. But before the subtle emotions of the soul could be interpreted complete knowledge of the construction of the body was required, and this could not be gained superficially, as now, from diagrams and treatises. Personal research in anatomy was as essential to the inexperienced artist of the fifteenth century as to the surgeon, and he must himself probe the corpse with his scalpel before it would deliver its secrets. One can conceive the

curiosity and interest such investigations would awake as the mysteries of the body were revealed. It is little wonder if he should tend to become absorbed in such studies for their own sake. But the Florentine artist had his purpose too deeply at heart to allow much deviation from his course, and it is but rarely that the so-called naturalist allowed his scientific interests to obscure his ultimate aims.

The realism of Donatello and his followers differed essentially from the realism of later art in that it was but a means to an end, not an end in itself. Realism in the Dutch School of the seventeenth century and of our own day seems to imply the deliberate rejection of the poetic and beautiful, the selection of the commonplace and ugly. With the Florentines of the fifteenth century truth to nature did not mean the ignoring of nature's most beautiful manifestations. On the contrary, they selected invariably those forms which were fittest to embody their ideals of physical and intellectual ability. I know of no Quattrocento Florentine painter or sculptor who was realistic in the modern sense of the word to the exclusion of the poetic and ideal, nor naïvely unselective as were the Flemings and Germans, nor interpreters *con amore* of the commonplace and ugly as were the Dutch of the Teniers School.

The noble idealism of the sculpture of Donatello; the chief of the Realistic School, is its greatest attraction. While imitating with scientific accuracy the human frame, rendering with precision its movements and gestures, his true interests were those of the poet and humanist. His chief aim was the interpretation of individual character, such subtle character as perplexes and baffles in the

"Zuccone," in the marble Baptist of the Bargello, above all in the sensitive mobile face of the "Poggio." Before such works as these one knows not whether most to admire the excellence of physical structure, the profound insight into character, or the technical ability by which the most delicate shades of that character are expressed.

On the enormous influence of Donatello on Florentine, and indeed on all contemporary art, there is no need to dwell. No sculptor or painter but submitted to it. Paduans, Umbrians, Venetians, even the Sienese, whose aims, being merely decorative, were most opposed to his, became in greater or lesser degree his imitators.

But in the immediate circle of his pupils, among those who best comprehended his aims and followed most closely in his path, two stand out conspicuously, inheritors in a great measure of his genius, as they were completely of his ideals and methods. Antonio Pollaiuolo and Andrea Verrocchio, the great scientific artists of the fifteenth century, became as it were the expounders of the new gospel of art delivered by Donatello. Desiderio, Mino da Fiesole and Antonio Rossellino, Donatello's older pupils, were men of genius who had acquired something of his marvellous dexterity. They gave the rein to their imagination and played with form with the license of the adept. By their influence, especially that of Mino—a born mannerist—the Florentine school of sculpture was in danger of becoming pedantic and euphuistic, had there been no counter-check of a purely scientific movement, such as that initiated by Pollaiuolo and Verrocchio. By their system of patient investigation and experiment, by their insistence on the study of anatomy and the science of perspective and composition, they set the standard for

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the thoroughness and erudition by which the Florentine school of art took a foremost place among the intellectual movements of the epoch. The arts of painting and sculpture, which had been in the hands of the early Sienese didactic and decorative only, which threatened in the hands of Mino da Fiesole and his followers to become mannered and artificial, under the vigorous guidance of Pollaiuolo and Verrocchio assumed its place as an important factor in the intellectual progress of the Renaissance movement.

Both sculptors had, if not actually learnt their craft in the *bottega* of Donatello, as is most probable, so thoroughly assimilated his teaching that they may without hesitation be called his pupils; and they seem, without personal rivalry, to have shared equally the position as chiefs of the most important training schools in Florence. Their methods were the same, the close and conscientious imitation of nature and especially of the human structure, and the complete rejection of all traditional mannerisms. Antonio Pollaiuolo is reputed to be the first Florentine artist who made a scientific study of the muscular system, and there is no question but that he carried his anatomical studies far beyond those of any of his contemporaries. Even Verrocchio, judging by the resemblance in the structure of his early nudes, would seem to have taken him as his guide in his anatomical studies, though from a fundamental difference of character between the two artists the influence was temporary only.

Antonio Pollaiuolo, concentrating his faculties on a thorough understanding of the human frame, and particularly its muscular system, represented the nude figure in action in higher perfection than even Donatello had

attained. His interest in the muscles and movements of joint and limb and his consequent emphasis of violent action gives his figures at times a truculence which verges on brutality. Verrocchio, while equally interested in interpreting human power and energy, expresses it less by its external manifestations of thews and sinews than by the intellectual force of character. The impression of strength received from the statue of Bartolommeo Colleoni is given less by his superb physique and audacious bearing than by the vitalising power and concentration of will interpreted in the features. Here lies the chief distinction between these two artists. To Pollaiuolo strength meant muscle and sinew trained to an iron tenseness. The type chosen by him to express his ideals is the athlete brutalised by savage passion, with knotted joints, bent sinewy legs, and huge torso; the forehead is deeply corrugated, the jaw square, the lips parted, bull-dog fashion, over the set teeth. His scenes are chiefly of ferocious combat waged with ungoverned fury. Nothing but the innate poetry of his temperament saves his art from the charge of brutality. With Verrocchio intellectual power dominates the physical energy. Fierce and vehement as is his type—the warriors of the Silver Altar and the Colleoni are the truest expression of his ardent temperament—it is never savage. In his earlier work he has imitated closely the construction of Pollaiuolo. The Christ of the Baptism and the “Sleeping Youth” of the Berlin Museum are of the same brawny build. Even the lean faces of Christ and the Baptist, with sparse beard and prominent cheek and jaw-bones, are the same. But the influence—possibly the result merely of companionship in their anatomical studies—was not lasting, and in the David he has already

renounced the gladiator physique and revealed his predilection for a more refined beauty.

These two masters were the chiefs who, after Donatello, took the lead and practically guided the course of Florentine art, definitely establishing its position as the scientific school *par excellence* of Italy. They were the connecting link between the older generation and the new, and under their care the seed sown by Giotto developed towards the full perfection of maturity in Leonardo and Michelangelo. Mastery of anatomy, of composition, of all the science of art, became by their training the rule among the Florentine artists, and even among the weakest the standard of merit is high. In the work of the feeblest Florentine painter of the middle of the fifteenth century the solidity of the figures and objects represented is usually well realised, the anatomy fairly correct, and the composition almost invariably well balanced.

The *ateliers* of Antonio Pollaiuolo and of Verrocchio were the chief training schools for central Italy, and in one or the other most of the sculptors and painters passed some apprenticeship before starting an independent career. It seems, however, that the *bottega* of Verrocchio took the lead in technical matters, in the chemical preparation of colour, the handling of chisel and brush, the casting of metal, and in all the practical and mechanical processes of the crafts of painter, architect, goldsmith, sculptor, and bronzefounder. Experiments of all kinds were made under his direction, the newly-introduced medium of oil was practised and brought to perfection, and the study of draperies and their arrangement formed a special branch of the educational system. The rapid progress in all technical matters made during the middle of the century

seems to have been chiefly due to the scientific training introduced by Verrocchio, who took the lead as pioneer and innovator of the new methods. By his labours the last restrictions imposed on the artist by imperfect knowledge and skill were removed, and the hand became free to interpret all that the mind conceived, even the most subtle and evanescent visions.

\* The scarcity of work that can be placed in Verrocchio's early years is not surprising when the multiplicity of the processes employed by him and his perfection in the technicality of each is considered. We know him to have attained proficiency in painting, in sculpture in marble and clay, in goldsmith's work, in practical architecture, and in the difficult craft of metal casting. To acquire so thorough a mastery in so many different branches of art in an age so comparatively inexperienced, many years must have been passed in experiment and study.

The science and thoroughness of Verrocchio's work in all its different branches is the keynote to his character and to his influence on Florentine art. In no authentic work is there any sign of hesitation or imperfect knowledge where the construction of the human form is concerned. Were no other test but that of feeble or faulty anatomy employed in deciding questions of authenticity it would be sufficient ground for rejection. Even in the earliest work known to us—the Baptism of the Accademia—the nude, though stiff in movement, is constructed with admirable science and truth.

The progress made by Pollaiuolo and Verrocchio in the special study of anatomy is their best claim to the high place they hold in the development of art. Giotto realised the solidity of form beneath the drapery,

Donatello mastered the muscular system and the movement of joint and limb, it remained for Pollaiuolo and Verrocchio to indicate with complete accuracy the bony structure of the human frame. In their figures we are conscious always, as in the well-constructed man himself, of the skeleton beneath the flesh. Verrocchio especially lays emphasis on the bone, and this gives to his faces and limbs a hardness sometimes counted as a defect, but whose value is incalculable in adding force and energy. The intellectual and physical strength given to the face in nature by the accentuation of well-formed bone, the insipidity and weakness of one in which the bone is undeveloped, is obvious to all. Verrocchio chose his types from those around him. In the typical Florentine face the bones are strongly marked, especially the malar and maxillary, and its attraction lies chiefly in this racial characteristic. It is not beautiful in the strict sense of the word, but it is interesting and impressive. Verrocchio, better than any other Florentine artist, appreciated this peculiar characteristic of his compatriots, and reproduced the type in his paintings and sculpture with special sympathy. The broad cheeks, the level brows, the square jaw, the firm muscles of mouth and chin, by which the Tuscan physiognomy gains its strength and dignity, are invariable characteristics in his construction of the face, and it is significant that his Colleoni, while bearing a superficial likeness to the portraits of the Bergamask prince, resembles even more the austere bony face of Dante, in which the intellectual and physical force of the Tuscan type is concentrated.

In his construction of the nude Verrocchio lays equal stress on the bone, and this, together with the muscular

torso and sinewy limbs, gives an impression of resistance and energy hard to match even among the athletes of Michelangelo.

And with the same truth and science as in his presentation of the muscular and mature body he gives also the softer forms of childhood. From the unjust attribution to Verrocchio of the feeble work of his followers, it is the custom to consider as the type set by him the puffy child with boneless limbs and rolls of superfluous fat, for which in reality his pupils, Lorenzo di Credi and Francesco di Simone, are responsible. Of children by Verrocchio we have but few examples, the Christ-child of the S. Maria Nuova Madonna, the Putti of the Palazzo Vecchio fountain and of the collection of M. Dreyfus and those of the Louvre sheet of drawings being all that are authentic, unless we add those carved on the marble frame of the S. Lorenzo Tomb. None of these have the flaccid obesity of what is usually called his type, the type popularised by the late Robbia *atelier*, and which is in fact rather imitated from the *putto* of Desiderio on the S. Lorenzo Ciborium. Verrocchio's child, like his mature man, is carefully and conscientiously studied from nature, the large head, the soft flesh and thick joints being in no way exaggerated. The flesh though soft is never flaccid; it covers solid bone, and we are as conscious of the small framework beneath as of the skeleton in his adult figures.

Verrocchio is above all the sculptor of beautiful hands. Vasari tells us that he took casts in *gesso* of different parts of the body, arms, legs, hands and feet, in order to study them with more facility; and this record is confirmed by his exquisite modelling of the hands and feet, remarkable

even among the Florentines, who bestowed on them so much attention. It is well to draw attention to the invariable beauty and truth to nature of the hands in all his authentic work, since this excellence alone would be sufficient warrant for the rejection of a group of paintings attributed to him, in which the hand is noticeable for its feeble and mannered construction. The type of hand selected by Verrocchio, and invariable in all his work, is large and strong, but sensitive and exceedingly delicate in shape, with broad palm and long fingers, muscular and flexible, a hand capable of expressive gesture as well as of strenuous grip. Among all the Florentines one only, Luca della Robbia, has equalled it in beauty, and there is much resemblance in the shape both of his hand and that of Verrocchio, Verrocchio's, however, excelling Luca's in strength, in expressiveness, and in realism.

To his mastery of equine anatomy the horse of the Colleoni bears sufficient testimony, to this day unequalled for beauty of form and noble bearing. In construction and action it shows an enormous advance beyond that of Donatello or any of his contemporaries, and compares favourably even with the superb antique steeds of S. Marco, from which he drew his inspiration. But it is evident from the science shown in the anatomy and movement of the limbs, that he was not content with a superficial knowledge of form derived from the antique, but that he studied also from nature with the same care he bestowed on human anatomy. We know from the record of Vasari that he occupied himself much with studies of horses, presumably long before the commission for the Colleoni statue, and it is probable that he received this commission as the result of a certain

renown he had already acquired as a master of equine anatomy.

In all his representations this truth to nature and thorough knowledge of the organism of the form he imitates is remarkable, and it may be asserted that in all genuine work of Verrocchio no fault of construction can be found, even the least detail of decoration borrowed from the animal or vegetable world being scrupulously true to nature.

The most salient characteristic of Verrocchio's work, like that of all the Realistic School, is strength, expressed not only by the athletic form and energy of his figures, but by his selection of ornament, by the vitality of his line, by the sharp precision of the least touch of his chisel and brush. No sculptor ever gave to marble a more granite-like hardness, nor to metal a more trenchant force.

His choice of ornament is in the highest degree significant of his character. He rejects completely those of the Donatellesque School which had become so popular in Florentine art—the winged cherub, the smiling *putto*, the hanging garland of fruit and flowers, and replaces them with the winged griffin, the fierce Medusa head, and the prickly acanthus. Like all the Renaissance decoration the originals of these are to be found in antique sculpture, and before him Donatello and Desiderio had employed them in the decoration of their tombs and monuments. We find the exact original of his female-faced griffin in the work of Desiderio, and of his spinous-winged dragon in that of Donatello. The Medusa head, originally borrowed from the breastplates of Roman Emperors, figures on that of Gattamelata, and the acanthus leaf had always been as popular with the Florentine as with the antique sculptors.

Yet in so personal a manner has Verrocchio treated these decorations, accentuating their fierce and trenchant qualities, that he has made them completely his own, and to us now they serve almost as a sign-manual of his work and that of his school. His fierce griffin has nothing spiritually in common with the mild beast of Desiderio, nor his terrible Gorgon-mask with those on the Roman breast-plates. His acanthus leaf seems to bristle like the spines of some formidable animal, and compared with the serpent-tailed dragon of his decorations the original in Donatello's work seems almost tame. His temperamental energy leads him to select his ornamental designs from the animal rather than the vegetable world. The boar's and lion's head and claws, the tortoise, the dolphin, all treated most realistically, are the chief motives of his decoration. He seems to have shared little his contemporaries' love of fruit, flowers and foliage, and when he introduces them it is with a fantastic ambiguity, a suggestion in them of the animal, of which more will be said in considering his work in detail and its relation to that of Leonardo.

The same characteristic severity manifests itself in the simplicity of his design and decoration, remarkable in that epoch of elaborate ornament. While Desiderio, Rossellino, and their followers were overloading their monuments with every kind of device, Verrocchio, disregarding the popularity of these works, remained rigorously severe. While they were dazzling the eye with brilliant colour, elaborating still farther the intricate carving with gold, crimson and ultramarine, he depended for colour on the material itself. Green serpentine, red porphyry, partially gilded bronze, are his only colours. His constant use of porphyry and

serpentine has sometimes been adduced as evidence of his partiality for colour, but it is rather a proof of the contrary. In comparison with the gaudy and varied painting in use among the sculptors of his day, their sombre red and jade-like green have an austere effect.

Verrocchio was one of the most original and independent of artists. He thought, saw, and executed from his own standpoint, uninfluenced by his predecessors or his contemporaries except in so far as all genius must assimilate from its surroundings. With the exception of the inevitable impression made by Donatello there is little indication in his works of more than a superficial and transient influence from his predecessors. In his youth, as has already been noticed, he imitated Antonio Pollaiuolo; certain forms he adopted from Desiderio, and his early painted work has sufficient connection with that of Alessio Baldovinetti to allow the supposition that he received some part of his early training from him. But such external imitations count for little in his development, which from first to last was definite and self-expressive. The greatest influence in his life was undoubtedly that of his own pupil Leonardo, between whose art and that of the early Quattrocentists his own stands midway. He formed the connecting link between Leonardo and the past, that is to say between tentative effort and supreme achievement. The genius of Leonardo brought to perfection the aims and ideals of the Florentine School. The science of Verrocchio made possible the subtle interpretations of Leonardo. The mastery of anatomy and of composition, the facility of workmanship and technical knowledge imparted by him to his pupil, gave to Leonardo the power to express freely his complex

conceptions of humanity and the mysterious harmonies of Nature.

But if Verrocchio gave much he received perhaps more in the inspiration gained by contact with the greater genius of Leonardo. The relation between the two artists was not that of master and pupil in the ordinary sense. If Leonardo learnt the rudiments of draughtsmanship and the technique of his craft in the *bottega* of Verrocchio and received from him his first impressions and suggestions, he exercised a reciprocal influence on the older master. The resemblance in their work is too striking for the strength of the mutual influence to be doubted. The germs of Leonardo's conceptions are to be found in the works of Verrocchio. The indefinable smile of the Mona Lisa plays already on the lips of the David, the fantastic rocks are already suggested in the landscape of the Baptism. The mysterious blending of natures, man with beast and beast with plant, had its origin in the brain of Verrocchio. But they were suggestions only, dimly foreshadowing the perfect realisation of Leonardo. In his turn Leonardo imparted much of the fire and force of his genius to Verrocchio. The immense stride made by Verrocchio in the later years of his life can be attributed to no other cause than contact with Leonardo's maturing forces. His advance in technical facility was the natural result of continual study, but the astonishing increase in vitality and breadth of vision in a man already past the prime of life can be explained only by some strong external impulse. In his last years his natural energies kindled to a blaze unaccountable in the ordinary course of development. The Colleoni statue and the Silver Relief of S. Giovanni reveal a concentration of power

so far beyond anything before achieved that the cause must be sought in some dominant influence. That this impulse and influence came from Leonardo is proved by the resemblance of these sculptures to his own most characteristic work. The additional fire and energy were sparks caught from the blaze of his genius. The concentrated force and keen vitality shown in these masterpieces of Verrocchio are the peculiar qualities of the work of Leonardo, and the superb type of vigorous manhood in which they are embodied is his personal creation.

At what date Leonardo entered the *bottega* of Verrocchio has not yet been ascertained, but it was presumably when he was quite a boy, if not a child. Although enrolled as *Maestro* in the Guild of Painters in 1472, and thus securing an independent position as an artist, he continued to remain with Verrocchio, and we know that he was living under his roof as late as 1476,\* thus when he was twenty-four years of age. He remained, if not under his roof, at least in Florence, until about 1483, after which time he took service with Lodovico Sforza and departed for Milan. It was in the years between 1477 and 1481 that Verrocchio was occupied with the Relief of the Silver Altar and the model of the Colleoni statue in which the influence of Leonardo is so striking.†

And with so much ardour did Verrocchio catch fire from his pupil that it is possible had he lived he might

\* See page 38, note \*.

† "En comparant attentivement les dates de la biographie de Verrocchio et de la biographie de Leonardo da Vinci, je suis arrivé à la conviction que Verrocchio ne s'émancipa véritablement qu'après s'être trouvé en contact avec son prétendu disciple, et que celui-ci lui enseigna autant de secrets qu'il en apprit de lui." (Muntz, Histoire de l'Art pendant la Renaissance, Paris, 1895, ii. p. 500, note 1.)

have attained a height but little below the point of perfection reached by Leonardo himself. He died at an early age for the men of that epoch of exuberant energy. At the date of his death he was but fifty-three, an age at which some of the noblest work of Leonardo, of Titian, and of Michelangelo was still undone. He was in the plenitude of his intellectual and physical forces, and in the natural course of things had still before him twenty years of activity, that is to say to a man of his temperament, of development and growth. As it is he lived long enough to alter the whole character of Florentine art, to bring to perfection the scientific aims of the school, and to create one of the noblest works of modern times, the finest equestrian statue in existence.

## CHAPTER II

### BIOGRAPHICAL

ANDREA DI MICHELE DI FRANCESCO CIONI, surnamed Verrocchio after his earliest master, was born in 1435. With the exception of a few trifling notices we possess no information as to his youth and early manhood, and even Vasari gives but a slight record. A few facts of his private life are revealed by the depositions of his father and himself to the Catasto,\* and from these we gather a general idea of his circumstances.

His father Michele, born in 1382, carried on the trade of a brick and tile maker, and was entered in the Guild of Stoneworkers. Later in life he obtained a situation as tax collector. He seems to have been fairly well off, owning a house in the Via dell' Agnolo in the parish of S. Ambrogio, as well as other property in the neighbourhood of Florence. He was already over fifty years of age when Andrea was born, the youngest child of his first wife Gemma. She died shortly after his birth, and his father married again, a woman named Nannina. The family by the first wife consisted of six, four sons, Andrea, Cioni, Giovanni, and Tommaso, and two daughters,

\* In 1427 a law was passed by which every Florentine citizen was required to make a declaration of his property for the regulation of the income tax.

Appolonia and Margherita. The latter was called Tita, to distinguish her from the grandmother of the same name, who lived with the family. By the second wife there was one son, Lorenzo.

In 1452 the father, Michele, died, and in the same year Andrea, then aged seventeen, had the misfortune to kill accidentally while throwing stones, one of his companions, Antonio di Domenico, a woolworker. The accident took place just outside the walls of the city, between the Porta alla Croce and the Porta Pinti. The youth died a fortnight after the blow, and Andrea was summoned to appear before the Council on the charge of homicide, of which, however, he was fully acquitted.

At what age he began his artistic career we have no certain knowledge, but it is without doubt that he received the rudiments of his education in the *bottega* of Giuliano dei Verrocchi, a noted goldsmith of his time. The style of his early work in its minuteness of detail and sharp treatment proves much practice in the goldsmith's technique, and the fact that he adopted and was known by his master's name points also to a long apprenticeship. Moreover, at the age of twenty-one, when he made his first deposition to the Catasto, he speaks of having then temporarily abandoned the trade of goldsmith since work was slack. That he was at one time in the *bottega* of Donatello, and learnt from him the art of sculpture we have the evidence of some of the earliest writers on Florentine art.\* Under Donatello, and in company with Antonio Pollaiuolo,

\* The Anonimo Magliabecchiano speaks of him as Donatello's pupil, "Andrea del Verrocchio, scultore et pictore florentino, fu discepolo di Donato." Giov. Battista Gelli, Florentine poet and littérateur, also speaks of him as the pupil of Donatello in his "Vite de' primi pittori di Firenze." (MSS. in the possession of Signor Girolamo Mancini, Cortona.)

he must have been initiated into the scientific methods of the realistic school of which the two artists afterwards became the chiefs. That he received his training as a painter from Alessio Baldovinetti certain imitations of that master in his early painting seems to prove, since his temperament was too widely different to that of Baldovinetti to allow the idea of any influence.

The death of his father seems to have left him in comparative poverty. The family property was divided, and his two sisters, Tita and Appolonia, received each a house as a marriage portion. The latter married a woolworker, Paolo di Domenico, and Tita, a certain Gregorio di Andrea Barbieri, by whom she had three children.

At the age of twenty-one, when he made his first deposition to the Catasto, Andrea was living with his step-mother, Mona Nannina, aged fifty-six, and his brother Tommaso, aged sixteen. They had many debts, and part of the property had been already sold to meet expenses. He declares himself to be poor and to have but little employment, and states that he had just been obliged to abandon the craft of goldsmith for want of work. He and his brother Tommaso, he pathetically winds up his deposition, were not earning enough to buy themselves shoes.\*

Vasari records that early in his career he was employed

\*. "Truovomi . . . chon poco esercizio chesso levo istare all' orafo e perche l'arte non lavora non vi isto più . . . mio fratello ista chon Romolo Ciechi assalato e non guadagniamo le chalzi." See Doc. i.

The three Portate to the Catasto made by Verrocchio in the years 1457, 1470 and 1480, from which the facts of his private life are gathered, were discovered by the author and first published in "L'Arte," Anno vii., 1904. Fasc. iii.-iv. Signor Milanese notified the existence of two of them, but without indicating under what Gonfalone they were to be found.

by Pope Sixtus IV. to decorate his private chapel in the Vatican with silver statuettes of the Apostles and other goldsmith's work, but nothing corroborates the statement. He tells us that the influence of antique sculpture seen by him in Rome while occupied with the work, and the value he saw attached to the smallest fragment of statuary, induced him to abandon the art of goldsmith and attempt more important work in marble and bronze. The motives imputed by Vasari to his artists are never very lofty, and in this case his statement is false from beginning to end. It is extremely improbable that Verrocchio ever visited Rome, and there is little sign in his work of more than a superficial influence of the antique. It is known from documentary evidence that he never definitely abandoned the craft of goldsmith, but continued to exercise it all his life. Even as late as 1471 he specifies his calling as that of *orafo*, as though it were his principal occupation.

"While he was occupied with painting," Vasari wrote in the first edition of his "Lives" published in 1550, "he did not fail to pay attention to geometry, having the mind to distinguish himself one day in architecture."\* This statement is confirmed by documents. The first authentic date we have of work executed by him is of an architectural design. In the year 1461 Francesco Monaldeschi, Bishop of Ascoli, ordered the erection of a chapel in the Cathedral of Orvieto to enshrine a Byzantine Madonna (the "Madonna della Tavola" still existing in the church). On April 28, 1461, the authorities of the Duomo sent to Florence and to Siena for designs, and the Florentine artists who furnished and were paid for drawings and

\* Vasari, "Le Vite," 1<sup>o</sup> ede, Firenze, 1550, vol. i. p. 464. The words were suppressed in the second edition.

models, were Desiderio da Settignano, Giuliano da Maiano, and "Andrea Michaelis," *i.e.* Andrea Verrocchio. The commission was ultimately given to neither, but to a Sienese, Giovanni di Meaccio, then employed as chief architect to the Duomo. The chapel is no longer in existence, and we have no farther record of Verrocchio's design or model by which to judge his architectural ability.\*

We may imagine Verrocchio during his youth and early manhood settled definitely in Florence, engaged in perfecting himself in the technique of the different crafts he practised, and in laying the foundation of the famous *bottega* which became the principal training school of Florentine Art. When the multiplicity of these crafts and his proficiency in each is considered, it will not seem surprising that little work, or record of work, that can be placed in his earlier years, is forthcoming. To attain skill in the arts of sculpture, architecture, painting, goldsmith's work, bronzefounding and mechanical engineering, in all of which he excelled, must have absorbed many years of study and experiment. \*We know that the apprentice of the fifteenth century learnt the practice of his art in executing the most subordinate details of his master's work, and it was not until he had acquired skill in the use of his tools that he was entered in the Guild of Masters and allowed to accept independent commissions.

The connection of Verrocchio with the Medici, who were throughout his life his chief employers, must have begun early. It is probable that he was first employed by Cosimo il Vecchio, as will be seen later in connection with a

\* For the above facts see Furini, "Ricordi di un Oratorio del secolo xv. nel Duomo di Orvieto" (Arch. St. r. dell' Arte, iv. p. 47).

relief executed by him for the Villa of Careggi. It is certain that he executed the Tomb of Cosimo in the Church of S. Lorenzo for Piero, and from the presence of the falcon, Piero's personal device, that he also received from him the commission for the Lavabô of the inner sacristy. He was employed by Lorenzo and Giuliano constantly throughout his life in many and various works, and would seem to have taken the place of Donatello as the favourite artist of the family. It will not be out of place here to speak of an important document which we shall have occasion constantly to quote, since it is our chief source of information concerning his works for the Medici—the Inventory of Tommaso Verrocchio.\*

Tommaso was, as we have seen, Andrea's younger brother, who followed the trade of a cloth-weaver. He appears to have been throughout his life a source of domestic trouble, always in financial difficulty, and leaving the burden of his family to his brother. After the banishment of the Medici he drew up and presented to the officials deputed by the rebels to value their possessions, a list of works executed by Verrocchio for the family, precisely for what purpose is unknown. "The heirs of Lorenzo dei Medici have to give for the work mentioned below . . ." the document begins, and then follows a catalogue of fifteen works, with a blank space left for the valuation. In his

\* The Inventory is transcribed in the Appendix. It was discovered by Dr. von Fabriczy, and published by him in the *Arch. Stor. dell' Arte*, Ser. ii. Anno i. Fasc. iii. The document is not in Tommaso's own handwriting, but is a copy made by a public scribe. The list does not seem to include all the works executed by Verrocchio for the Medici, and cannot be used as evidence for the rejection of work not mentioned therein, since the purpose for which it was composed is unknown.

Testament Verrocchio had appointed Tommaso heir to all the debts due to him in Florence, and it may be that he made the list in the hope of extracting money. If so, it must have been on false pretences, since several of the works enumerated date from the time of Piero, and it is extremely unlikely that Lorenzo, so just in all his dealings, should have left debts of such long standing unpaid. But to whatever cause we owe its existence, its value is great, for by it much new light is thrown on the work of Verrocchio. By it we learn that he painted standards and decorated armour for the Tournaments of Lorenzo and Giuliano, and that the Slab-Tomb of Cosimo il Vecchio at the foot of the Altar in S. Lorenzo is his work.

The first entry is of the bronze David which was executed for the Villa of Careggi, in all probability for Piero. Then follows a list of other works in marble and bronze, among them the Putto with the Dolphin now in the Palazzo Vecchio, also executed for Careggi. We read of a portrait on panel of Lucrezia dei Donati, the mistress of Lorenzo; of Standards painted for the Jousts of Lorenzo and Giuliano; of a helmet decorated with the silver figure of a lady, and of arms and accoutrements for the Duke Galeazzo Sforza. The list is a proof of the versatility of his employment and that he carried on simultaneously the arts of painter, of sculptor, and of goldsmith.

Verrocchio seems to have enjoyed greater favour with the Medici than with the Church authorities of Florence. Compared with his contemporaries he was employed but little by the ecclesiastics. From the Opera del Duomo he received, so far as is known, but two commissions, and one of these was for a bit of mechanical engineering—the casting of the bronze ball and cross to crown the lantern of

Brunellesco's cupola. Verrocchio was a practical bronze-founder, and unlike Donatello and Luca della Robbia cast his statues himself.\* In September 1468 he received this commission, having previously himself taken part in the deliberation as to suitable payment for the work in a council at which were present Lorenzo dei Medici, Luca della Robbia, and Antonio Pollaiuolo. On May 27, 1471, the gilded ball was drawn up and placed in position.† The work was a test of his engineering powers, for, as Vasari remarks, "much ingenuity was needed in the construction, since it had to be entered from below, and much care in arming it with good supports that the wind might do it no injury." But the ball of Verrocchio, armed against the wind, was not proof against the lightning, and after being many times struck, it finally met its end in the historic storm which took place on January 17, 1600, falling with great damage to the lantern and cupola, and rolling as far as the Via dei Servi. The present ball, which is much larger than Verrocchio's, was cast in 1602 by order of the Grand Duke Ferdinand I.

The second occasion of his employment by the Opera of S. Maria del Fiore was in 1477, when he was commis-

\* In 1467 we read of Verrocchio lending metal to Luca della Robbia and Michelozzo for casting the last panel of the bronze doors of the Sacristy in the Duomo. "1467, Nov. 4. Andrea del Verrocchio dee avere per metallo prestato a Luca e a Michelozzo per gettare le due ultime storie della porta della sagrestia . . . fior. . . ." (Archives of S. Maria del Fiore).

† Landucci in his "Diario" writes: "E a di 27 di maggio 1471 si tirò su la palla di rame dorata in su la lanterna della cupola di Santa Maria del Fiore in lunedì." In confirmation of this date an entry in the Archives of the Cathedral records on the 28th of May 1471, payment for bread and wine given to the workmen who assisted in raising the ball.

sioned at the same time as Antonio Pollaiuolo to prepare models for the reliefs of the Silver Altar of S. Giovanni. He sent in two models for competition, but only one was accepted, which he executed in silver in 1480—the Decollation of the Baptist—one of the finest works of his mature years.

Records of Verrocchio's work during his youth and early manhood are scanty, but from 1468 up to his death the notices are frequent. The Medici, the municipal authorities, the Signoria, and the Guilds, loaded him with important commissions, and from now till his death the record of his work is unbroken.

As early as 1465 he had been commissioned by the Università dei Mercanti to execute the bronze statues of Christ and S. Thomas for the Tabernacle in the Church of Or S. Michele; but it was eighteen years before he completed it, a long time even for those days when the patience of commissioners seems well nigh inexhaustible. It may be that the management of his large *bottega* and his constant employment by the Medici left him little time to execute other work, for he shows the same slackness, so strange in a man of his energetic temperament, in carrying out the commissions of the Council of Pistoia—the Forteguerri Tomb and the Altarpiece of the Madonna and Saints. The former was begun by him in 1474, the latter presumably about 1472, yet both were left unfinished at his death. Other records testify to the pressure of work at this time. He was employed by the Signoria to execute bronze candelabra for the Palazzo Vecchio, payments for which he received in 1468, 1469, and 1480. In the autumn of the year 1474 he cast a bronze bell, wrought with figures and ornaments, for the Vallombrosan monks of Montescalari. With so many commissions it might have been presumed

that his financial circumstances had improved; but in his declaration of goods to the Catasto of 1470 there is the same statement of poverty, of debts, and of "beni alienati."

We have now reached the most important epoch of Verrocchio's life—the commission for the equestrian statue of Bartolommeo Colleoni by the Venetian Signoria. Vasari has recorded that he occupied himself much with studies of horses, and it is certain that some proof of his proficiency as a master of equine anatomy must have induced the Venetians to apply to a Florentine artist. Of this more will be said later in studying the monument. Here it is sufficient to indicate the few dates and facts important in his biography. In 1479 he received the commission to prepare a model of the horse in competition with Vellano of Padua, the assistant of Donatello in the Gattamelata monument, and Leopardi of Ferrara, both well known and exceedingly popular with the Venetians.

Although no documentary evidence exists to prove it, there is no doubt, from the resemblance of his statue to the antique bronze steeds of S. Marco, that on receipt of the commission he must have gone to Venice to study, although we know that the model was actually executed in the Florence *bottega*. By July 12, 1481, the model was already completed, and sent to Venice by way of Ferrara, Verrocchio applying to the Ferrarese ambassador in Florence for its free passage through the State. It was exhibited together with the models of Vellano and Leopardi in Venice, and was preferred to theirs. The commission for the bronze statue was now definitely conferred on him, though not without difficulties from the jealousy of the rival competitors. He took up his abode in Venice,

hired and furnished a house in the parish of S. Marciliano on the Rio della Misericordia, and left his business in Florence in the charge of Lorenzo di Credi. Precisely at what date he went to Venice has not yet been ascertained, but that he was there long enough to bring to full completion the clay model of both rider and horse is definitely proved by a letter of Lorenzo di Credi written after his death, in which he speaks of both as finished.\* He fell ill in the summer of 1488, and on June 25 of that year he made his will, in which he speaks of himself as "sound in mind and intellect, but languishing in body" (Doc. iv.). In this will he refers to his model of the Colleoni statue as unfinished, and demands of the Venetian Signoria that the task of completing it might be given to Credi. This, coupled with the statement of Credi above referred to, seems to prove that he must have temporarily recovered from his illness, and lived long enough after to complete the statue.

According to Vasari, he caught cold after the heat of the furnace during the process of casting the bronze, but that he even attempted this is improbable. It is most likely that he died from some malarial fever contracted from the unaccustomed climate of the lagoons, from which he was suffering when he made his testament. No more precise date can be given for his death than the months between the making of his will—June 25—and October 7 following, when Credi speaks of him as already dead. This faithful assistant, who had carried on the affairs of the *bottega* in Florence during his absence, and had made several journeys to Venice to render an account of his administration, went thither once more to pay the last

\* See Doc. xiv.

service to his master and friend. In spite of the wish expressed by Verrocchio in his testament, that if he died in Venice he might be interred in the cemetery of S. Maria del Orto in that city, Credi brought the body back to Florence, and it was buried in the family vault of S. Ambrogio. The stone had already disappeared in 1657, but Vasari tells us that it bore the following inscription: S. MICHAELIS DE CIONI ET SVORVM was the original burial record of his father, and to this was added HIC OSSA IACENT ANDREAE VERRUCHII QVI OBIIT VENETIIS MCCCCLXXXVIII. The following doggerel epitaph was inscribed later :

Se il mondo adorno resi  
 Mircè delle belle opre alte e superne  
 Son di me lumi accesi  
 Fabbriche, bronzi, marmi in statue eterne.

Thus at the early age of fifty-three, in the zenith of his powers, died Verrocchio, one of the greatest and most progressive artists of the Renaissance.

In the last year of his life he had accepted from Matthias Corvinus, King of Hungary, the commission to carve a marble fountain to be erected in Florence, and the marble was already furnished, as we know by a document dated August 27, 1488, in which one Bertoccio di Giorgio di Pellegrino, stone-worker of Carrara, claimed payment for the blocks from Alessandro, the King's agent in Florence, stating that the fountain was to be executed by Andrea del Verrocchio.\* That the work was ever begun seems unlikely, the probability being that Verrocchio ordered the marble with the intention of beginning it on his return from Venice.

\* Vasari, iii. p. 361, note 3.

From the pecuniary point of view Verrocchio's life seems to have been up to the last a hard one, chiefly caused, as it appears, by the burden of impecunious relatives. In his youth he was forced to part with property belonging to his father to meet expenses, and notwithstanding the abundance of work, as late as 1487 he had to appeal to the commissioners of the statues of Or S. Michele for payment due to him, because he was in great poverty, "with the burden of a large family, especially the dowerless daughters of his brother Tommaso reduced to extreme misery" (Doc. xi. 2).

Little reading between the lines is needed to see that Tommaso played the part in his life that Giovan Simone played in that of Michelangelo. He found it necessary in his testament to guard against his squandering of the family property, or selling it for his own benefit, and to ensure the dowry and inheritance of his daughters, and it is significant that the payment of legacies and executorship was entrusted, not to his brother, but to Credi.

Besides the dowerless daughters of Tommaso, Marietta and Agnoletta, Verrocchio had also during the last years of his life to support the family of his sister Margherita. In his last declaration of goods to the Catasto (1480) he mentions as inmates of his house three of her children, Ginevra,\* aged seventeen, Lucrezia, aged fourteen, and Michele, aged ten. His goods at that time consisted of the smallest amount of ready money—in all not amounting to a florin—and a hired house, the family house in the Via dell'Agnolo having been let. (Doc. iii.)

Andrea never married. Like so many of the greatest

\* Ginevra in 1488 was already married to Giovanni Bottari.

artists of the Renaissance, notably Donatello, Luca della Robbia and Michelangelo, he seems to have had no time to touch life on its human side. He devoted himself entirely to his work, and dissipated no part of his forces in personal indulgence. There is no hint in any record of his life of any passion or of any relation other than that of family affection and friendship. Goldsmith, sculptor, painter, bronzefounder, architect, mechanic, and, as Vasari tells us, musician and mathematician, he found in these various arts sufficient outlet for his energies. The management of his large *bottega* must have occupied also much of his time. It was, as has been said, the most important training school for artists in Florence, and attracted besides many pupils from the neighbourhood. Among his pupils the most important were Leonardo, Perugino and Lorenzo di Credi. Leonardo seems to have received from Verrocchio his entire art education, for (if we may trust Vasari) he was placed with him as a mere child, and we know that as late as 1476 he was still living under his roof.\*

Verrocchio's relations with Lorenzo di Credi lasted till his death. They were friends even more than master and pupil, and doubtless the affection Andrea bore him blinded him to Credi's artistic shortcomings. That he had an undue estimate of his powers is evident from the clause in

\* Two documents exist, one dated April 9, the other June 7, 1476, referring to an accusation brought against Leonardo, in which his place of residence is given as being with Verrocchio, "Leonardo di Ser Piero da Vinci sta con Andrea del Verrocchio." These documents have been misread, and the name of Verrocchio coupled with his in the accusation, but this is entirely erroneous. The only mention of Verrocchio's name is in connection with Leonardo's place of abode. The documents have been published by Smiraglia Scognamiglio, "Ricerche e Documenti sulla Giovinezza di Leonardo da Vinci," Napoli, 1900.

his will, where he begs the Venetian Signoria to allow Credi to finish the statue of the Colleoni, urging that "he is capable of completing it." We may be thankful that either the better judgment of Lorenzo himself or the wisdom of the Signoria prevented the fulfilment of this wish.

Impeccable in morals, industrious, faithful and amiable, "uomo onesto e di buona vita," Lorenzo was but a feeble artist, and in the history of Verrocchio his place is best considered only from the human side, on which he was so admirable. To him, as we have seen, Andrea confided the executorship of his will, the care of his burial, and the dispensation of his legacies. To him he bequeathed all his possessions in Venice and his artistic properties in Florence, with such of his goods as were not inalienable from his own family.

To the brush of Lorenzo we owe the portrait generally accepted as of Andrea Verrocchio in the Uffizi, Florence (*see* frontispiece). The resemblance it bears to Vasari's engraving published in the second edition of the "Vite," points certainly to its authenticity; yet it must be allowed that it bears also the strongest resemblance to the face of Perugino, painted by himself in the frescoes of the Cambio, Perugia. Credi, as we know, painted a portrait of this artist as well as of Verrocchio; and it is difficult to accept without hesitation that this prosaic and bourgeois face, so completely lacking in any sign of inspiration or energy, represents the man who expressed in his work so much of the fire of genius, unless, indeed, it is assumed that Lorenzo was incapable of interpreting these qualities. It is only of late years that the painting has borne Verrocchio's name. In the Inventory of the Gallery made in 1769 it was

catalogued as a portrait of Martin Luther, painted by Holbein. Authentic portrait or not, a truer insight into the personality of Verrocchio is obtained from a study of his works, in which we find all the qualities of energy, poetry and imagination conspicuous in the painting by their absence.

## CHAPTER III

### EARLIEST WORKS

WE are assured by Vasari that Verrocchio devoted the best part of his youth to goldsmith's work, and the assertion is confirmed both by the existing documents and by the character of his early productions, which reveals a long training in the execution of small and detailed ornament. In tracing his artistic development through his authentic painting and sculpture, an emancipation, at first gradual and afterwards extremely rapid, from the restricting effect of this prolonged apprenticeship, is noticeable. Even in work of such full maturity as the Medici Tomb of S. Lorenzo, the tendency to conceive the composition on a small scale is evident. Energetic and noble as is the execution in detail, the general effect is rather that of a casket than a sarcophagus. The same criticism may be applied to the Putto of the Palazzo Vecchio and to the David, both of which are dainty statuettes impossible to conceive, as we might the Amorino or the David of Donatello, on a heroic scale. The vision of Verrocchio expanded as his hand gained more facility. The detail, while equally elaborate, falls into place with the increased breadth of conception. The Group of Or S. Michele is treated on the largest scale, while the figures in the Relief of the Silver Altar, actually

but a few inches high, give an impression of almost colossal size. This breadth of conception and corresponding ease of handling increased so rapidly that when at last Verrocchio touches the apex of his development in the Colleoni statue, design and detail are as noble and free as any work of Leonardo or Michelangelo.

Of Verrocchio's early goldsmith's work nothing now remains, and our knowledge of it is limited to a few descriptions by Vasari. He mentions some *bottoni da piviali*—clasps for priestly vestments—executed for the Church of S. Maria del Fiore,\* and more explicitly describes two *tazze*, apparently for secular use, one decorated with animals, leaves, and other devices—a work famous among the goldsmiths of Florence—the other surrounded by the Donatellesque design of dancing *putti*.

It is unfortunate to have to open the study of an artist, whose best medium of expression was sculpture, with his painted work, but in following a chronological system this is unavoidable, for there can be no doubt that the earliest existing production of Verrocchio is the Baptism of the Accademia. Of the history of this Altarpiece nothing is actually known except that it was painted for the Vallombrosan monks of S. Salvi, but few works of the fifteenth century have been the subject of more speculation and dispute.† In spite of the constraint of composition, the stiffness of the figures, the dryness and angularity, it is

\* It has been suggested that a bronze plaque in the Berlin Museum representing in flattest relief the Virgin, SS. Lorenzo and George, and Adoring Angels, is a proof-cast of one of these clasps, but the design is too trivial to have been even a youthful work by Verrocchio.

† The picture passed on the suppression of the Convent of S. Salvi to that of Santa Verdiana, from whence, during the French occupation, it was removed to the Accademia.



*Alinari, Florence*

THE BAPTISM. ACCADEMIA, FLORENCE

*Face p. 42*

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often placed by the critics at a late period in Verrocchio's life, in order to make possible Vasari's statement that part of it was painted by Leonardo, a statement which rests upon no secure basis.

Albertini, it is true, writing before Vasari, makes a similar statement in the slight record of the picture he gives in his "*Memoriale*." \* His words are amplified by Vasari both in his *Life of Verrocchio* and in that of *Leonardo*, and his detailed and trivial anecdote has grown so popular and deep-rooted a tradition, that it is with difficulty the mind can free itself sufficiently to examine the truth of the assertion without prejudice.

Vasari tells us that *Leonardo*, then a boy in *Verrocchio's bottega*, helped him with this *Altarpiece*, and painted thereon an *Angel* so much more beautiful than *Verrocchio's* own work, that he, enraged to be outdone by a mere child, resolved never again to touch a brush, and from that time onward renounced entirely the art of painting.†

It is perhaps unnecessary to remark on the puerile sentiment Vasari attributes to *Verrocchio*, a petty jealousy little in keeping with what is known of the man or the epoch. It is enough to point out that the statement of his renunciation of painting is by documentary evidence proved to false, since we have records that not only was he employed by the *Medici* as a painter at intervals during his whole career, but in the very last years of his life was engaged on the *Altarpiece* for the *Duomo of Pistoia*, part of which is certainly executed by his own hand. Besides these works, proved by existing documents to have been

\* "*Lascio in Sancto Salvi tavole bellissimi & uno Angelo di Leonardo Vinci.*" Albertini, "*Memoriale*," Firenze, 1510.

† Vasari, Ed. Sansoni, Firenze, 1878, iii. 366, and iv. 22.

executed by him, several other paintings may by analogy of style be attributed to him, and there is no doubt but that he accepted and executed with his own hand commissions for paintings in almost equal proportion with those for sculpture and goldsmith's work.

The attribution to Leonardo of any part of this painting of the Baptism seems to me to be equally false, and for the following reasons ; first, that the Angel attributed to him is certainly by the same hand as the other, which is accepted by all the critics, and with good reason, as the work of Verrocchio himself ; next, that it shows none of the special characteristics of Leonardo, remarkable even in the most youthful productions of his brush ; and lastly that it has complete analogy with the work of Verrocchio himself, though of a later date than the rest of the Altarpiece. These assertions must, however, be supported in detail.

Albertini and Vasari mention only one of the Angels—that in the foreground—as being the work of Leonardo, and, so far as I am aware, no critic has ever attributed the other to him ; such an attribution being rendered more improbable by the existence of the study for the head executed in Verrocchio's most characteristic style. Yet if construction of form, arrangement of draperies, and general technique be examined, it will be seen that beyond question both figures are by the same hand. The faces are so similar in feature and expression as to allow the assumption that they were painted from the same model ; the soft shadows are laid in, the flesh is modelled, the hair is indicated, the eyes and eyebrows are treated in precisely the same manner in both. Scheme of colour and brushwork are the same, and but for a preconceived idea founded upon



*Alinari, Florence*

THE BAPTISM. DETAIL. ACCADEMIA, FLORENCE

*Face p 44*



Vasari's anecdote, the division of a group so homogeneous in every respect could never have been entertained. That the two Angels differ from the rest of the painting in greater freedom of conception and execution is obvious, but that they must be taken together as the work of the same hand and of the same date is equally certain.

That the hand is Verrocchio's and not Leonardo's the presence of his special characteristics and the absence of those of Leonardo is sufficient evidence. The most remarkable quality of Leonardo's work is its vivacity, a vivacity noticeable in the slightest of his engineering sketches and even in his handwriting. The least touch of his pen, pencil, or brush is rapid and vividly alive. It is sensitive, yet decisive. It darts and scintillates like flame, giving to the painting or drawing, even when the subject represented is tranquil in sentiment, an excess of life almost fantastic.

In his earliest work known to us, the Predella panel of the Annunciation in the Louvre (Plate VI.), this vivacity is present to so great a degree that the solemnity of the theme is almost marred by the alertness and *briskness* of the figures. Each touch of the brush in hair and wings and grasses sparkles with life. Judging by the immaturity of style and a certain boyish *naïveté* of treatment, the panel must have been executed when he was a mere lad, at the same date therefore which is assumed for the painting of the Angel of the Baptism. The tranquil figures of these Angels, with their placid expression and the quiet lines of the draperies are exactly opposite in sentiment to those of Leonardo; and even in the spirals of the hair, though there is force and decision, there is little vivacity of touch. They show, moreover, no sign of being the immature work

of a boy, but are painted with the assurance of an experienced artist with a thorough knowledge of anatomy, and the technical facility only to be acquired by long practice. This is remarkable in the fine modelling of the faces, and especially of the beautiful hands. The figures show, in short, the excellence of structure and strength of Verrocchio, but have not the fire of Leonardo's unique genius.

That they were added at a later date to the rest there is no question. The advance in freedom and facility of execution over the rest of the work is remarkable. It is perhaps idle to speculate as to the cause of the later addition, yet we have as precedent that Verrocchio took his own time in the execution of orders, the twenty years which elapsed between the commission and completion of the Group of Or S. Michele, and the Pistoia Altarpiece, which was put aside half finished and left for many years untouched owing to lack of payment. It is at least possible that to some similar reason is due the fact that the Angels were added some years after the rest of the work, or that some accident or damage of time necessitated a repainting of the original figures.

That the full-face Angel is Verrocchio's work has never been disputed. The construction and modelling of the face and hand is in his most characteristic style, and in further confirmation we have the chalk drawing of the Uffizi (Cornice 47, No. 130), which is obviously executed as a study for the painting (Plate III.). This drawing is also one of his most characteristic works, and its authenticity has never been doubted. It has not, as is sometimes assumed from the prickings, served for transference to the panel. The prickings are probably of a later date and follow



*Alinari, Florence*

HEAD OF ANGEL. UFFIZI, FLORENCE

*Face p. 46*



inaccurately the delicate lines. There are besides essential differences between the drawing and the painted head. In the former it is bent at a sharper angle, and the eyes are downcast instead of being uplifted. Yet there is no doubt but that it was executed as a study—probably from life—for the painting, and at a date when Verrocchio had already acquired freedom and facility. The work is broad and sweeping, the shadows are softly laid in, and there is no sign of any hardness or angularity such as is perceptible in the figures of Christ and the Baptist.

On account of this hardness and angularity the Altarpiece itself must be placed at the starting point of Verrocchio's development, at the time when imagination and execution were still fettered by too prolonged an application to minute metal-work. The want of proportion and of harmony of movement in the figures (the Baptist is larger and on a different plane to the Christ) are defects due to lack of habit in conceiving composition on a large scale, while the harshness and rigidity and the sharpness of touch betray the goldsmith's training. The foliage of the palm-tree and the draperies of the Baptist seem as if cut out of sheet-iron.

It is interesting to compare the composition with that of the Baptism in the series of small panels illustrating the Life of Christ, No. 233 of the Florence Accademia (Plate IV.). This panel wrongly attributed to Fra Angelico is the work of Alessio Baldovinetti,\* and the fact that it

\* The attribution of this panel and others in the series by the same hand is disputed. They have been attributed to Pier dei Franceschi and others, but a comparison of the construction of the faces and figures, the treatment of the cypresses, above all the peculiar technique, broad and at the same time timid, with the authentic works of Baldovinetti, seem to warrant the attribution to that master.

served Verrocchio as his model, both in general lines and in detail, goes to confirm the theory that he owed his training as a painter to that master. That he imitated the faults as well as the merits of the painting is a proof of his youth and inexperience, for the ungainly figure and striding attitude of the Baptist he has copied exactly, though with his superior knowledge of anatomy he has corrected the impossible position of the arms. He has followed Baldovinetti's landscape with its peculiar foreground rocks and the hard lines of the bulrushes and grasses, but he has treated the distance with greater freedom and truth to nature, and with a suggestion of mystery. Both Baldovinetti and Verrocchio, conservative in their composition, have followed with more or less precision the design of the Silver Altar of S. Giovanni executed in the previous century.

The popularity of the work caused Verrocchio's Baptism to serve as the model in all later representations of the theme. We find it repeated almost exactly by Credi for the monks of S. Domenico a Fiesole, and by the Robbias in each of their hexagonal fonts.

Besides the reminiscence of Baldovinetti the painting shows to a striking degree the influence of Antonio Pollaiuolo, an influence which hardly survives in the work of his middle period, and is not at all perceptible in his later productions. Though in general lines and attitude the figures of Christ and the Baptist follow those of Baldovinetti, in structure and feature they resemble the athletes of Pollaiuolo. The brawny build, the knotted joints, the tense muscle, the bent legs, the faces with their strongly accentuated bone, harsh features, and sparse beards reproduce exactly the Pollaiuolesque type. The



*Alinari, Florence*

THE BAPTISM. BY ALESSIO BALDOVINETTI? ACCADEMIA, FLORENCE

*Face p. 48*



oriental loin-cloth is used constantly by Pollaiuolo and his pupils, and seems to have been one of his special *bottega* properties. The colour and treatment of the distant landscape is also somewhat Pollaiuolesque.

With all its defects of composition and the lack of technical experience it reveals, the picture bears still more striking evidence of the thoroughness of Verrocchio's training in anatomy. The nude figure of Christ as an anatomical study is faultless. The construction of the head, torso and limbs, the indication of the bone, the realisation of the resistance of the muscle proves a complete knowledge of the structure of the body. The excellence of the anatomy is incongruous to an almost grotesque degree with the *naïveté* of the action and the treatment of the foreground, rocks and foliage. The defects in the figure of the Baptist are not those of construction, for the bone and muscle in the meagre face and half-skeleton limbs are admirably indicated. What is lacking in both figures is freedom of movement. The limbs, faultless in structure, work stiffly and awkwardly.

To place a painting which shows so plainly the inexperience of youth after work so mature and free as the David and the *Putto* of the Palazzo Vecchio, and at the same date as the supple figure of the Thomas of Or S. Michele is to oppose all the laws of development. Those who so date it seek to explain the defects as the result of inexperience in an unaccustomed technique; but the hand is, after all, the minister of the brain, not the brain of the hand. It is incredible that an artist who had mastered with the science shown in these sculptures the movements and action of the limbs, and been able so admirably to render the suppleness and flexibility of the body, should be impeded by his

tools to the extent of violating all the laws of his training. No hand able to design with the freedom and to model with the facility shown in these statues could afterwards or at the same date execute work so cramped and restricted as the figures of the Baptism.

The Altarpiece seems to have been painted partly in tempera and partly in oil, and it has been assumed that the parts executed in tempera are the work of Verrocchio and those in oil of Leonardo. For this reason much also of the landscape has been attributed of late years to him. The present state of the painting makes the question of the original technique extremely difficult, for, like most of the pictures in this Gallery, it has been so flayed and daubed over by "restorers" that the original brushwork is in parts completely lost. The sleeve of the Angel in the foreground, for example, is so thickly coated with dark oil paint that the elaborate and carefully painted embroidery which covered it is scarcely visible.

Morelli considered that the entire picture was originally executed in tempera, and that the oil paint is the work of the restorer. My own observation leads me to the opinion that, while the original work was entirely in tempera, the two Angels were painted in oil and at the same time parts of the landscape gone over in the same medium. We know that Verrocchio was one of the first to adopt the oil-technique, and that his *bottega* was the trial-ground for all kinds of experiment in the grinding of colours and use of mediums, Lorenzo di Credi being specially occupied with such experiments. Verrocchio's later works are all executed in oil, and it is probable that at the date of the addition of the Angels he had definitely adopted it and abandoned the use of tempera.





*Alinari, Florence*

THE ANNUNCIATION. UFFIZI, FLORENCE

For purposes of argument too much has perhaps been said of the defects of this picture, too little of its merit. On the poetic beauty of the Angel there is no need to dwell, since it is recognised to the full in its attribution to Leonardo. But it is not only in this figure that Leonardo is anticipated. The landscape with its river and distant crags, while resembling those of Pollaiuolo and evidently inspired by him, has an imaginative quality that suggests the mysterious background of the Mona Lisa and the S. Anna. This Leonardesque landscape we find again in a painting which, though officially attributed to Leonardo himself, seems rather by analogy of style with his authenticated work to be by Verrocchio—the Annunciation of the Uffizi (Plate V).

This picture was executed for the Altar of the Sacristy of the Convent of Monte Oliveto, near Florence, and while there was attributed to Domenico Ghirlandaio. On its removal to the Gallery at the suppression of the Convent, it was labelled with Leonardo's name, but with a note of interrogation. Since then it has been the subject of various speculation. Morelli considered it to be the work of Ridolfo Ghirlandaio, and connected it with the Coronation of the Virgin, by that inferior painter in the Louvre.\* Officially, and by most of the present critics, it is now without hesitation given to Leonardo, as indeed could hardly be otherwise by those who attribute to him the Angel of the Baptism, for the painting is precisely similar. Again the small Annunciation of Leonardo must be cited to prove the impossibility of his authorship. The composition in the predella picture is obviously imitated from the larger work. The Virgin is seated in the terraced

\* "Die Galerie zu Berlin," p 22.

garden of a Florentine villa, with the dark trees defined against the pale sky in the falling twilight. But what a difference in the treatment, and in the spirit that animates the figures! In the Uffizi Altarpiece they are placid and serene like the Angels of the Baptism. The Virgin receives the message without emotion. She even places one finger on the page to mark the place where her study has been interrupted, and will evidently return to it unruffled after the Angel's departure. In the small panel of Leonardo the figures though less dignified, owing to their great vivacity, are concentrated and absorbed, the one in delivering, the other in receiving the message. The theme has been felt and the painter's imagination fired. No one who had once conceived the subject in this spirit could have treated it with the coldness of the Uffizi painting. Moreover, the work in the predella picture, though betraying lack of experience and *naïveté*, is yet free from errors of composition noticeable in the Altarpiece. Here the figures are dragged too widely apart. They have no connection with each other. There is no centralisation in the grouping, and as far as the æsthetics of composition go the panel would be better divided into two separate pictures. In the predella the figures are pyramidally grouped, and as in all well-composed scenes the group is contained within well-defined and well-balanced lines. Another emendation is the simplicity of the reading-desk, which in the Altarpiece attracts the eye unduly by too great elaboration, a fault which is accentuated by its being too much in the foreground and on a different plane to the figure seated at it.\* Lastly, the

\* Though in no way to be considered as evidence in favour of Verrocchio's authorship, it is yet worthy of note that this reading-desk



*Giraudon, Paris*

THE ANNUNCIATION. BY LEONARDO DA VINCI. LOUVRE

*Face p. 52*



awkward arrangement of the Virgin's draperies would be impossible to an artist with so keen a feeling for the beauty of line as Leonardo. The fall of the heavy folds between the knees is repeated a second time between her leg and the arm of the chair, giving a most unpleasant effect. These defects of composition are certainly strange in Verrocchio with his scientific training, and can be accounted for only by want of experience at this date in grouping, all his earlier works with the exception of the Baptism and the Careggi Relief being single figures. It is incredible that Leonardo, the perfection of whose composition is one of his greatest qualities, who in the boyish painting of the predella has instinctively avoided all these faults, should have committed such errors in what is obviously a more mature work.

The superficial resemblance of the flowers and grasses in the foreground to those of Leonardo in colour and general form is adduced as a proof that the painting is by him, but by the side of the foliage of the "Vierge aux Rochers" of the Louvre and of the pen studies of plants and grasses in the Windsor Collection, they are tame and lifeless.

Leonardo's treatment of grasses and leaves is unique, and reveals more than any other of his special forms his strange fantastic imagination. As at times he suggests the beast in his human figures,† so his plants have the sinuous coils bears the strongest resemblance in ornamental detail to his Sarco-phagus of the Medici in S. Lorenzo.

† For example, the half kneeling Angel of the "Vierge aux Rochers" in the Louvre, whose crouching attitude and raised arm suggest some sphynx-like creature, half lion, half woman—a suggestion his assistant has not dared to imitate in the *replica* of the National Gallery. Again, the portrait of the Lady with the Ermine in the Collection of Prince Czartoryski, Cracow, whose face reproduces in contour and expression that of the animal in her arms.

and writhing movement of the snake. A suggestion of most of the external characteristics of Leonardo's work is to be found in that of his master, but the original idea is so transfigured in the alembic of his vivid imagination that it becomes his own creation.

The resemblance in brushwork and colour of the whole painting, as well as in the construction and actual features of the faces, to the Angels of the Baptism, leaves no doubt but that they must have been executed at about the same date. The arrangement of the draperies, the peculiar contrast of heavy shadows and bright lights, the very pigments used, are identical. What the date may be can be gathered only by the increase of facility over the early work of the Baptism, which points to the lapse of several years at least. In the construction of the body of the Virgin and her upright attitude there is a lingering reminiscence of Antonio Pollaiuolo. The beauty of the hands and their structural resemblance to that of the full-face Angel of the Baptism should be noticed.

Although the picture lacks the supreme distinction of Leonardo's work, it is yet one of the most beautiful paintings of the Renaissance for the dignity and charm of the figures, and even more for the poetic suggestion of the landscape, with its successful rendering of an atmospheric effect. It seems the twilight hour, the moment so brief in Italy between daylight and darkness, in which the cypresses stand out black masses against the pale sky, losing all but the outline of their form. This seizure of a transient effect is characteristic of Verrocchio, and we shall find it over and over again in studying his works. The landscape is essentially Florentine, in spite of the distant sea and port. Often at the hour of nightfall, so well indicated in this

painting, I have observed the peaks of the Carrara mountains, seeming snow-clad in the pale light, stand out beyond the valley of the Arno with exactly the same fantastic effect. With all his imagination Verrocchio was before all a realist, and the dream-like rock-landscape first hinted in the Baptism, developed in this painting, and brought to its full beauty by Leonardo in the backgrounds of the Mona Lisa and the S. Anna, are faithful interpretations of one of Nature's most evanescent moments. The impression of solemnity we receive from the picture is due chiefly to this mysterious atmospheric effect.

Unfortunately the picture is much damaged and repainted, and it is evident that the original composition has been tampered with. If the position be taken so that the light strikes the surface of the panel, the shape of other cypresses beneath the coarse repainting of the walls of the house is plainly visible. This commonplace, heavily-daubed building, so out of harmony with the exotic background, seems, as far as to the open door, to be a later, though not modern addition; and so carelessly executed that the outer line of the wall has been daubed over with heavy green colour as far as the cypress, both outlines being thus lost in a meaningless smear. It is evident that the line of the cypresses originally extended beyond the head of the Virgin, which would thus have been outlined dark against the pale sky, instead of, as now, being light against the dark green wall. The abraded surface of the panel, from which much of the tempera coating is broken away, shows the damage it has suffered from time or carelessness while in the Convent. Hardly a few square inches in the foreground of the original brushwork remains unspoiled by the heavy brush of the restorer. The shoulder and sprouting feathers

of the Archangel, the lily, the grasses, and some parts of the background alone have escaped, but by these we can judge of the delicacy and beauty of the original painting. The coarseness and lack of intelligence with which the repainting has been done leads to the supposition that some monk of the Convent, whose business was to paint and whitewash the cells, had been employed to repair the damaged Altarpiece. The daubing beyond the wall of the house, the smearing of the Angel's wing, is not the work of one who had received even a rudimentary education as an artist. Nothing testifies so strongly to the immortality of genius as the survival in a work so bedaubed of its charm and poetry.

In connection with this painting mention must be made of the charming silver-point drawing of "Venus and Cupid" in the Uffizi Collection (Cornice 48, No. 212), which by analogy of style with it and with the Angels of the Baptism must date from about the same period. (Plate VII). Not only is the face of the Venus constructed and modelled in the same manner, but there is a close resemblance of feature to the Virgin of the Annunciation and the Angels, allowing the assumption that all the figures were executed from the same model.



*Alinari, Florence*

VENUS AND CUPID. UFFIZI, FLORENCE

*Face p. 56*







THE RESURRECTION. VILLA MEDICI, CAREGGI, NEAR FLORENCE

(By kind permission of Signor Segré)

## CHAPTER IV

### EARLY SCULPTURE

It is impossible in the study of so versatile an artist as Verrocchio, who accepted indiscriminately during his whole life commissions for sculpture large and small, for paintings sacred and secular, and for decorative metal-work, to group together according to material his various productions. With so skilful a craftsman, equally well trained and almost equally efficient in the technique of the different arts he practised, the medium employed is of small consequence in tracing his development.

In studying the Annunciation of the Uffizi, the chronological order of his works has, through its connection with the Angels of the Baptism, been somewhat broken, for judging by the style two terra-cotta works seem to be of an earlier date. These are the statuette of a "Sleeping Youth" in the Berlin Museum, and the very important relief of the Resurrection recently discovered in the Villa of Careggi, works which may be studied together, since it is possible that they have some connection with each other.

The painted terra-cotta relief of Careggi seems to be the earliest existing sculpture of Verrocchio, and from certain circumstances of assumed *provenance*, it is probable that it

was executed for Cosimo il Vecchio. It was discovered in the attics of the Villa in many fragments not many years ago, thrown aside as of no value among a quantity of rubbish. Some of the most important parts are missing, but it has been judiciously pieced together with no attempt at restoring the missing parts. Built by the late owner of the Villa into the wall of the inner courtyard, it was first identified as a work of Verrocchio in the present year by Count Carlo Gamba and Dr. von Fabriczy.\*

The composition is imitated from the Tympanum of Luca della Robbia, executed in 1443 for the door of the Sacristy in the Duomo, to which it faithfully adheres in general design as well as in much of the detail. The figure of Christ rising from the Tomb is precisely the same in attitude and gesture, and differs only in the type of face, which is personal to Verrocchio, and in a slight readjustment of the draperies in order to show more of the nude torso. The Angels flying on either side are two instead of four, but the gestures repeat with little variation the upper figures in Luca's Tympanum. The position of the five soldiers is more varied, but the general arrangement is the same, one stretched out in the foreground, with two on either side<sup>†</sup>; only, where those of Luca are all in deep sleep, Verrocchio, with characteristic love of transient movement, has represented two in the act of awaking. The palm shrubs, copied by Luca himself from *trecento* work, are imitated exactly.

But closely as the composition follows that of Luca della Robbia, the sentiment is entirely personal and offers

\* See "*L'Arte*," vii. 1904, Fasc. ii., "Una Terra-Cotta del Verrocchio a Careggi," by Carlo Gamba. By the kindness of Signor Segré, owner of the Villa, I am able to reproduce a photograph of the relief.

the most vivid contrast to the classic tranquillity of the original. The face of Christ, with its large features, high cheek bones and forked beard, resembles precisely that of Or S. Michele. The vehement Angels, with their beautiful plumage and restless draperies, correspond with those modelled for the Forteguerri Tomb now in the Louvre. The savage half animal face of the soldier, yawning like a roused tiger, is Leonardesque in its energy—offering in its modernness a *bizarre* contrast to the conventional treatment of the theme. In the half naked figure on the other side, who seems vainly struggling for consciousness, there is a suggestion of the enchained Titans of Michelangelo. Altogether the work is a curious link between the art of the Quattrocento and that of the Cinquecento, and a remarkable instance of Verrocchio's progressive and innovating tendencies.

But the most admirable and characteristic part of the work is the noble and poetic figure of the young soldier asleep in the foreground. The shape and flexibility of the limbs within the armour is splendidly indicated. The attitude is superb, and the mental and physical relaxation of a sleeper has never been better rendered. The square bony face, finely modelled on broad planes, with high cheek-bones and powerful jaw, represents Verrocchio's favourite type of youth in both sexes.

The terra-cotta is lightly painted in various colours, and the accessories of the armour have been gilded. The background is blue, of the same tint as the Robbia enamel. The figures are about one-fourth the size of life. The modelling of the hands and feet seen from below is as excellent as in all the authentic work of Verrocchio, but the relief was adapted to a given height above the eye, and the

photograph being taken from the same level does it little justice either in general effect or in detail.

There is little doubt but that it was originally executed to fill the Tympanum of the door of the Chapel, which opens on the courtyard built for Cosimo il Vecchio by Michelozzo, and that it was removed in the late seventeenth century to make way for the present oval window so out of character with the original architecture. This window, opened to give light to the dark Chapel, is the only architectural alteration in the courtyard, and the measurements of the relief correspond precisely with the space between the architrave and the vaulting of the Loggia. It is probable that the sculpture, broken up during the process of removal, was thrown aside as worthless by the owners, at a period when the art of the fifteenth century was held in slight esteem.\*

Its presence in the Villa of Careggi proves that it was executed for the Medici, and Count Gamba suggests with some reason its identification with the entry No. 5 of Tommaso's Inventory "Per una storia di rilievo chom più figure." He reasons with justice that the relief entered in

\* In the article above cited, in which Count Gamba publishes the first notice of this relief, he has suggested that it may possibly be identified with an Altarpiece catalogued in the Inventory of the Medici possessions taken in 1492 in the following words: "Palazzo di Careggi. Nella chappella. Una tavola d'altare chon cornice dorato atorno, dipintovi drento el sepolcro del nostro Signore schonfitto di croce e cinque altre figure, tutte chomesse in un telaio con pilastri achanalati a uso di marmo e peducci e capitelli dorati chon architrave fregio di diamanti e cornicie tutto." (See Müntz, "Les Collections des Medicis au XV<sup>e</sup> Siècle," p. 88. The inaccuracy of these Inventories is well known, yet it is scarcely likely that subject and material should be so confused. The lack of any mention of the relief in the Inventories is probably due to the fact that it was built into the wall and could not thus be removed.





*Graphische Gesellschaft, Berlin*

SLEEPING YOUTH. BERLIN MUSEUM

*Face p. 61*

the list was executed in clay, since there is no specification of the material, and the Inventory being presumably drawn up as a claim for money had it been of marble or bronze Tommaso would certainly have mentioned it.

The dating of the relief is for the present hypothetical. Count Gamba considers it as the earliest existing work of Verrocchio, not even excepting the Baptism, but from the superior excellence and freedom of execution, the flexibility of the figures and the assurance and even audacity of the treatment, it would seem to be of a later date. If the suggestion as to its *provenance* from the door of the Chapel in Michelozzo's Loggia be correct, it would probably have been executed at the commission of Cosimo il Vecchio, and must therefore date from before 1464, the year of his death.

It would be rash to do more than suggest that the terra-cotta statuette of a Sleeping Youth in the Berlin Museum (Plate IX) was modelled as a preliminary study for the young soldier in this relief, but that it was executed for some similar scene there can be little doubt. The Pollaiuolo-esque construction of the body and limbs points to an early date, and the realism of the treatment shows that it was modelled directly from life. Though the attitude differs considerably from that of the soldier in the Resurrection, the faces have a close resemblance and the same model seems to have served for both figures. The modelling of the powerful torso and limbs, and especially of the hands and feet, is of the utmost science and beauty, and the elaborate finish of what is evidently a mere *bottega* study from the nude testifies to the care bestowed by Verrocchio upon such preparatory sketches.\*

\* It was bought from the Collection of the Marchese Spinola, Genoa, where it was catalogued as "Abel." Its original *provenance*, however,

One of the finest and most important of the Renaissance sculptures in the Victoria and Albert Museum, South Kensington, must without hesitation be given to Verrocchio (Plate X).<sup>\*</sup> The small stucco relief named "The Genius of Discord" and officially attributed to the School of Leonardo, is for superb composition and modelling of the nude, for crispness of touch and masterly handling, for dramatic fire and energy, worthy of his best years—the years of the Silver Relief of the Altar of S. Giovanni and the Colleoni Statue. The strong influence of Pollaiuolo, however, perceptible in the conception of the theme and the construction of the nude, points rather to an earlier date, though exactly where to place it would be difficult to decide. The relief represents an allegorical scene, conceived in the manner of Pollaiuolo's engraving, "The Battle of the Nudes." Across a piazza surrounded by Renaissance buildings indicated in the lowest relief and with a beauty of proportion and perspective beyond praise, rushes a haggard female with streaming hair, grasping a pole with furious gesture. Her face bears the strongest resemblance to the Medusa masks introduced so often by Verrocchio, with sharp features and high cheek-bones, and her draperies are arranged with his characteristic full yet functional folds. In the foreground are nude male figures grouped with mathematical precision and perfect balance, two seated at the extreme ends of the *plaque*, the rest standing in belligerent attitudes. The seated figure to

was from Florence. It has been suggested that it belongs to the group of modern forgeries, but this cannot for a moment be accepted, in view of the excellence and the *quattrocento* character of the work.

<sup>\*</sup> The photograph from which the reproduction is made unfortunately gives but little idea of the delicacy and beauty of the relief.



"THE GENIUS OF DISCORD." VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM, SOUTH KENSINGTON



the left in attitude and in structure of the torso and limbs recalls vividly the Sleeping Youth of the Berlin Museum. In the middle distance is seated a judge watching with keen emotion the various scenes of combat going on around him and seeming to vibrate with concentrated energy. To the left on the same plane a youth emerging from a portico bestows an insolent caress on a nude female, rousing the jealous wrath of her protector, who seems about to give vent to savage fury. Beyond these, again, other figures are seen through the open arches of the city wall, indicated in the lowest relief and with the slightest touches, yet all with equal vigour and energy. The actions are transitory in the characteristic style of Verrocchio and dramatic to the highest degree. Even in the Silver Relief and the Colleoni Statue he has hardly surpassed the energy and *élan* of these tiny figures. With all its vivid life and vehemence, however, the action does not overpass the limits of sculptural treatment, but is restrained and solidified by the perfect balance and precision of the composition and by a certain titanic majesty even the minutest of the figures possesses. The relief would seem to be the model for some *plaque* to be executed in bronze, and Dr. Fabriczy has suggested that it may be Verrocchio's study for the work as cited above in Tommaso's Inventory—"Per una storia di rilievo chom più figure."\* Dr. Bode, who at one time supposed it to be by Verrocchio, has in his latest publication given it (with a note of interrogation, however), to Leonardo himself.† So excellent is the work, so full of fire and energy, as to be not unworthy of even so high an

\* C. von Fabriczy, "Verrocchio al Servizio de' Medici," Arch. Stor. dell' Arte," Ser. ii., Anno I., Fasc. iii.

† Bode, "Denkmäler der Renaissance Sculptur," Tafel 449.

attribution, and were it not for the influence of Pollaiuolo and the strong resemblance in certain details to Verrocchio's known work—the construction of the nude, the treatment of the draperies, &c.—it might readily be accepted as the work of the greater artist. As it is, it offers but one proof the more of the close tie that connected Master and Pupil.\*

The bronze David now in the Museo Nazionale is accepted almost universally as the earliest sculpture of Verrocchio, but it is certainly subsequent to the Careggi Relief, and the "Sleeping Youth" of the Berlin Museum, if not to the "Discord." Vasari places it as one of the first works executed after the (apocryphal) visit to Rome. "After he had returned to Florence," he writes, "with money, fame, and honour, he was ordered to make a David of bronze, in height two and a half braccia, which completed was placed in the Palazzo at the top of the stairs where was *la catena*, to his exceeding praise." Vasari did not know, or had forgotten, that the statue was originally executed for one of the Medici, probably Piero, to decorate the Villa of Careggi, and that it was only later bought by the Signoria and removed to the Palazzo Vecchio. The first entry in Tommaso's Inventory refers to this work: "Per un davitte e la testa dj ghulia," with the marginal note "per a Charegj." It was sold by Lorenzo and Giuliano in 1476 to the Signoria for the price of 150 broad florins, and the date mentioned in the document of payment has been mistaken by some of the earlier writers for that of its execution.

\* In the Collection of M. Gustave Dreyfus, Paris, is a small bronze *plaque* representing the Judgment of Paris, which from the resemblance of treatment to the group above mentioned in the "Discord"—the youth caressing the female with the jealous protector in the middle distance—must be classed as of the same period.



*Alinari, Florence*

DAVID. BARGELLO, FLORENCE

*Face p. 64*



It was bought by the Signoria, as the document of purchase states, "to decorate and beautify their magnificent Palace" (Doc. vi.), and was placed, as Vasari says, at the entrance of the Sala dell' Orologio, then called "La Catena." The Hall, since the clock from which it took its name no longer exists, is now called the Sala del Giglio from the Stemma of Florence. The original pedestal still remains to show the spot, but is now surmounted by a bust of the Grand Duke Ferdinand I. Here the statue with drawn sword guarded the entrance to the tower, the slayer of the Philistine symbolising, as did also the Judith, so often sculptured and painted by Florentine artists, the liberty of the Florentine Republic. It stood here until the seventeenth century, when it was removed to make way for the bust and placed in the Guardaroba, where it remained until its transference to the Gallery of the Uffizi in 1777.

Sunk into its present ugly stand in the Bargello, the statue is not placed as it originally stood on the pedestal, as the point of the heart-shaped plinth shows. To obtain the effect intended by Verrocchio it should be viewed from the right, so that the face be completely full-front. The photograph here reproduced is taken nearly, though not quite, from the correct point of view, but from a position directly in front no just idea of its beauty can be obtained.\* The sculptors of the Quattrocento, even when their statues were not intended for niches, carefully adapted them to be seen from one point, except when they were to decorate the centre of a courtyard or fountain, and it is astonishing how much difference even a slight deviation from this point of view produces in general effect, in expression and in

\* For the correct point of view, see the reproduction taken from a cast in Dr. Mackowsky's "Verrocchio," *Künstler Monographien*, p. 9.

composition. Carefully as the back of the statue is finished, it is evident that its original destination at Careggi was, as later in the Palazzo Vecchio, to stand guard before some door, and so to be viewed chiefly from a given point. The faults sometimes attributed to the work, the prominent elbow, the somewhat trivial expression, vanish completely when looked at from the right position. Standing directly before it the action is comparatively tame, the projecting elbow breaks the outline disagreeably, and the turning of the head to one side is meaningless. From the correct standpoint the supple swing of the body, the audacious carriage of the head give to the statue an expression of superb self-confidence unmatched save in the S. George and the marble David of Donatello. The eyes glance freely and boldly from under the level brows, the smile on the lips is full of meaning. One hand rests lightly on the hip, the other grasps the sword with menace and resolution. The figure vibrates with youthful vigour and the pride of conquest. With characteristic independence Verrocchio has troubled himself little to follow traditional representation or the biblical narrative. This youth with his carefully curled hair, his gold-fringed jerkin, and dainty sandals, and armed with his own sword, is a young Roman patrician rather than the shepherd-boy who put off the armour furnished him and went to the battle armed only with a sling and stones from the brook, and cut off the giant's head with his own huge weapon. Donatello in both his statues of David has followed the narrative more closely.

In construction the figure is faultless. The modelling of the supple body under the close-fitting jerkin, the beauty and expressiveness of the hands, the indication of sinew swelled by violent action, are most admirable.

*statue of David  
as  
Ocas. a  
almost  
similar*

There is a marked advance in freedom and flexibility of limb over the Sleeping Youth of Berlin. In the head of Goliath and nowhere else is there any reminiscence of the influence of Pollaiuolo, the light build and delicate limbs of the youth being as different as is conceivable from his brawny athletes. The face is as mobile as the body, with the suggestion of the subtle smile that plays on the lips of Leonardo's Gioconda. The square construction of bone and the marked features are peculiar to Verrocchio. The luxuriant locks, carefully parted and combed, are also very characteristic, and show that, like Leonardo, he delighted in "begli capegli ricci ed inanellati." Perhaps even it was Verrocchio who first inspired Leonardo with this love of beautiful hair. We know at least that his arrangement with the clustering curls was imitated by all contemporary Florentine artists.

The goldsmith's love for detail is shown in the elaborate ornaments of the dress, the fringe, the sandals, and the borders of the jerkin finely wrought with the arabic letters, so popular a decoration at that date. These ornaments still bear remains of their original gilding.

The graceful pedestal with its delicate carving, which still remains in the Palazzo Vecchio, must certainly be, if not the actual carving of Verrocchio, at least designed by him. That it dates only from the acquisition of the statue by the Signoria is proved by the fact that it bears, not the arms of the Medici but those of the Republic, on its capital. The pillar is of Verrocchio's favourite red porphyry, and the white marble capital surmounting it is carved with musical instruments appropriate to David, "the sweet harpist," and with the Lily and Cross of the

Republic intertwined with garlands. The measurement of the plinth, 34 centimetres, corresponds exactly with the base of the statue. Besides its intrinsic beauty, which is great, the pedestal has the value of giving the correct height at which Verrocchio intended his statue to be placed—150 centimetres, half as high again as we now see it. May it one day be reinstated thereon !

Another work executed for the Medici for their Villa of Careggi, and probably at no distant time, is the Putto with the Dolphin, now in the Cortile of the Palazzo Vecchio. The third entry in Tommaso's Inventory refers to this statue: "Per el bambino dj bronzo chon 3 teste dj bronzo e 4 boche dj liono dj marmo," bracketted, with the statue of the David, under the marginal note "Per a Charegj."

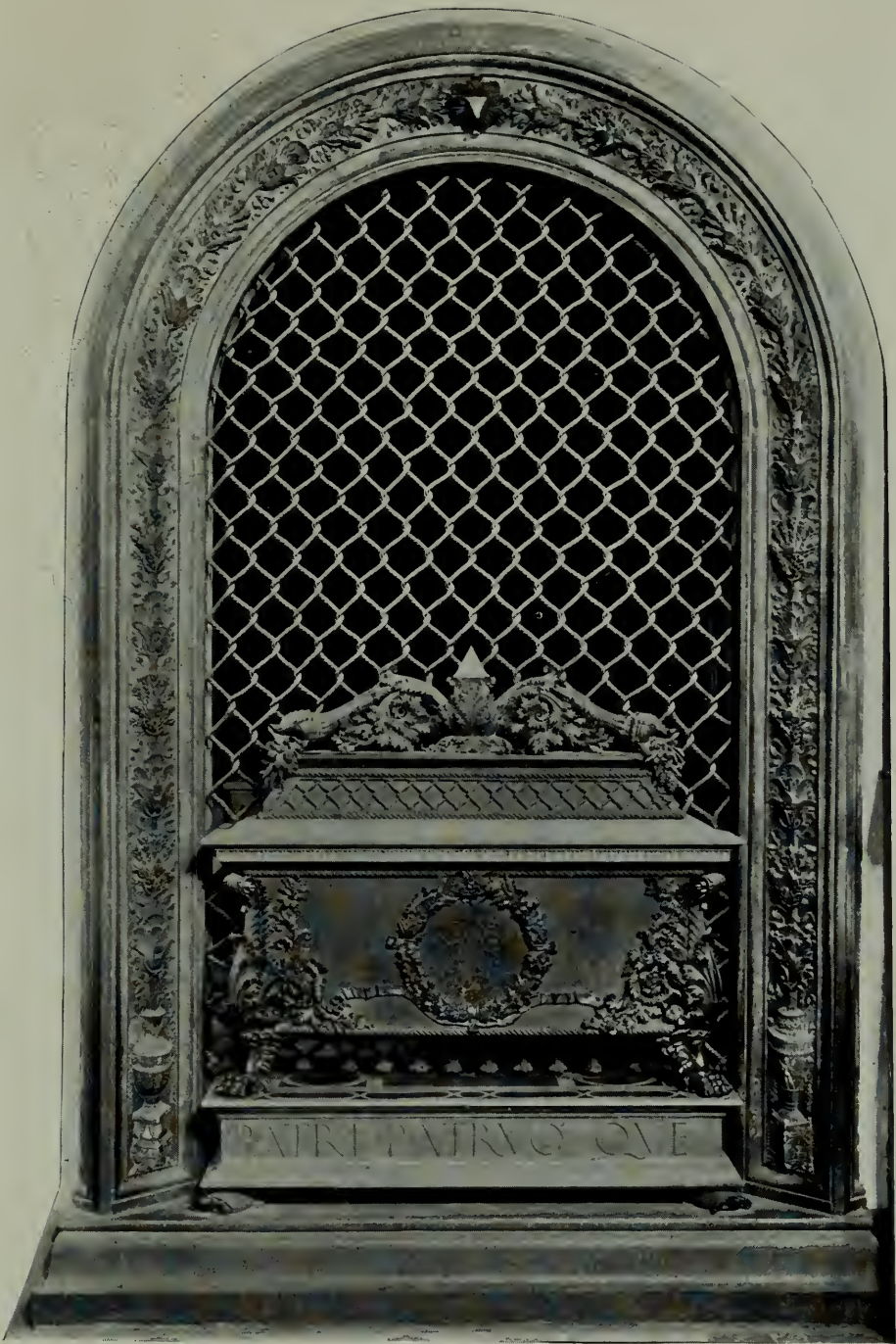
"He executed for Lorenzo de' Medici," writes Vasari, "for the fountain of the Villa at Careggi, a putto of bronze throttling a fish; the which, as may now be seen, the Lord Duke Cosimo has caused to be placed on the fountain that is in the Courtyard of his Palace; the which putto is certainly marvellous."\*

As late as 1553 the bronze David of Donatello occupied this place in the centre of the courtyard, as we know by a statement of Condivi.† Exactly at what date it was removed to make way for the fountain is not known, but since the second edition of Vasari, from which the above extract is quoted, was published in 1568, it must have been between these two dates.‡

\* Vasari, iii. 364.

† Condivi, Vita di Michelangelo, 1553. "XXII. Quel che si vide" (David with the head of Goliath) "nel mezzo della corte del Palazzo de' Signori è di mano di Donatello."

‡ In the first edition of Vasari of 1550 the work is not mentioned.



*Brogi, Florence*

TOMB OF THE MEDICI. S. LORENZO, FLORENCE

*Face p. 76*





*Alinari, Florence*

PUTTO WITH DOLPHIN. PALAZZO VECCHIO, FLORENCE

*Face p. 68*



In its present state nothing of the fountain is the work of Verrocchio, except the bronze figure of the *putto* and the three marble heads of lions inserted below. His original design, which included, as we have seen from Tommaso's Inventory, four lions' heads and three heads of bronze—probably human masks—is unknown. The present commonplace porphyry basin, with the marble pilaster and steps, are the work of Francesco Tadda, and were executed at the date of the transference of the statue to the Cortile. The bronze is much injured, having lost its original patina during the process of cleaning the pipes in recent times, and that which it has since gained is in irregular whitish patches, almost like fungus, which greatly disfigures the delicate modelling.

Unlike the David, the figure is of equal beauty from whatever point it is viewed, being destined for the centre of an open space. It is even perhaps most attractive from the back, where the sharply cut wings and the little fluttering shirt have a charming effect. These wings are of great beauty, having a light *feathery* quality unmatched in sculpture, (if we except those of Desiderio on the Sarcophagus of S. Croce, the same successful realisation of the buoyancy and cleaving power of plumage which is seen in that small portion of the Angel's wing which has escaped the smears of the restorer in the Uffizi Annunciation.) The charming Amorino flits lightly as a bird, with hardly any pressure on the rounded surface on which it rests, the weight borne chiefly by the strong delicate wings. Yet, though the movement is transitional, the balance is so perfectly maintained that there is no uncomfortable suggestion of impermanence or restlessness. From

whichever side we look, the body is perfectly poised on its centre of gravity.

In this *Putto* of the Palazzo Vecchio we have our first introduction to the realistic type of child which replaced that of the Donatellesques, and became so popular in Florentine art. That Verrocchio had studied the anatomy of the infant with the same care that he bestowed on the mature body is proved from its truth to life. The thickened joints, the rolls of loose fat, the dimpled flesh, so different from his treatment of the hardened muscle and bone in the adult, have been studied with care. Yet with all its softness, one is here, as in all the nudes of Verrocchio, conscious of the bone beneath. The spiritual qualities of infancy—its gaiety and light-heartedness—are interpreted as successfully as the external form is imitated.

Another *putto*, probably a study for some similar work is in the collection of M. Gustave Dreyfus, Paris (Plate XIII). It is of terra-cotta, and much of the original delicacy of the modelling has been lost by the heavy coat of paint which disfigures it. The body is poised on the half globe with the same lightness and balance as that of the *putto* with the dolphin. From the position of the raised arm and the puffing of the cheeks it would seem to have been intended to blow a long trumpet. Some such figure must have been that described by Vasari as executed by Verrocchio for the clock of the Mercato Nuovo, a *putto*, which, by means of a movable arm, struck the hours on a bell with a hammer—"cosa molto bella e cappriciosa." Dainty and imaginative, how different is the authentic *putto* of Verrocchio to the heavy clumsy child so often ascribed to him!

In the sheet of drawings of nude children in pen and sepia



PUTTO. COLLECTION OF M. GUSTAVE DREYFUS, PARIS  
(By kind permission of M. G. Dreyfus)







*Giraudou, Paris*

DRAWINGS OF PUTTI. LOUVRE

in the Louvre we have examples of his studies from life.\* There are nine studies of children, five on one side of the sheet, four on the other, in all kinds of positions, rapidly sketched apparently from the same child as it changed its action and attitude. Standing, sitting, lying, running, each movement and posture is as true to nature as an instantaneous photograph, and the figures are sketched with a touch as vivid and vigorous as that of Leonardo. We shall have occasion to refer later to this sheet of drawings in discussing the authenticity of the so-called "Verrocchio Sketch-book." Here it is necessary only to draw attention to the similarity in construction of the nude bodies to the two *putti* above noticed.

\* Discovered by Morelli in the Dépôt of the Museum. The inscription on one side laudatory of Verrocchio is by a contemporary, to whom probably the sheet originally belonged. The transliteration, published by M. de Chennevières in the *Gaz. des Beaux Arts* (N.S. Vol. XIX. p. 516), is as follows :

" Viderunt equum mirandaque arte confectum,  
 Quem nobiles Veneti tibi dedere facturum,  
 Florentie decus crasse mihi crede, Varochie,  
 Qui te plus oculis amant diliguntque coluntque  
 Atque cum Jupiter animas infuderit ipsi  
 Hoc tibi Domitius rogat Salmonicus idem  
 Vale et bene qui legis."

## CHAPTER V

### S. LORENZO

THE patronage of Verrocchio by the Medici must have begun even before the death of Donatello, for, as has been seen, it was most likely Cosimo himself who ordered the relief of the Resurrection for the Villa of Careggi. That it was Piero, one of the most enlightened of his race in matters of art,\* who commissioned him to execute the Slab-Tomb for his father in the Church of S. Lorenzo, is known from the document of Tommaso. That it was Piero who ordered the Lavabô in the Inner Sacristy (Plate XV.) is also proved by the presence of the Falcon, which was his personal device. This Lavabô, judging by the style of decoration and the quality of the work, is certainly by Verrocchio.

The earliest mention of this sculpture is by Albertini in his "Memoriale," who attributes it to Rossellino.†

\* "Pierre le Goutteux. . . était l'organisateur véritable du musée médiceen ; ce que son père Cosimo avait entrepris avec l'initiative et les vues supérieures de l'homme de génie, lui l'a accompli avec la persévérance, la minutie, la sagacité d'un collectionneur de race." (Müntz, *Les Collections des Médicis*, p. 11.)

† "In Sancto Laurenco. . . Lascio stare altri marmi & sepulchri & il putto marmorea di Desiderio & lo altare sculpto con Abraham per mano di Philippo Brunelleschi et illavatorio del Rossello." (Memoriale, Firenze, 1510.)

Vasari \* and the Anonimo Magliabecchiano both speak of it as the combined work of Donatello and Verrocchio, the latter specifying the parts executed by Andrea to be "the falcon and other ornaments around." † Richa, writing in 1757, speaks of it as being entirely the work of Donatello. ‡ The critics of our own day are unanimous in attributing part at least to Verrocchio, several however considering the background to be by Rossellino. As in the case of the Baptism, it would seem as though this arbitrary division of the work is due to the suggestion of tradition, for both basin and background are too homogeneous in design to doubt that, if not executed by the same hand, they are at least due to the same brain.

This design is very characteristic of Verrocchio in its use of coloured marbles—red porphyry and green serpentine—and the introduction of animal form in the decoration in preference to the *putti* and garlands of the Donatellesques. The sculpture is almost like a huntsman's trophy with the savage boars' heads, the twisted serpent-tails, the bat wings, the lion's mask, the dolphins, the female-headed dragon below, the fierce falcon above. Donatello composed no design without his favourite *putti*, while the suave decorations of Rossellino are completely opposed to these sharp and energetic forms. For a basin

\* In his Life of Donatello, Vasari writes, "Fece" (Donatello) "nella sagrestia di S. Lorenzo un lavamani di marmo nel quale lavorò parimento Andrea Verrocchio." Vasari, ii. 414.

† "Fece anchora" (Donatello) "un vaso da lavare le manj, hoggi nella sagrestia di S. Lorenzo, opera bellissima con il falchone ed altrj hornamenti intorno di mano d'Andrea del Verrocchio." (Fabriczy, Il Codice dell' Anonimo Gaddiano. Firenze, 1893, p. 52.)

‡ Richa, Notizie Istoriche delle Chiese fiorentine. Firenze, 1757. S. Lorenzo, p. 39.

in which to wash the vessels of the religion of peace nothing could be less appropriate than the choice of ornament, which would more fitly decorate a pagan altar to drain the blood of sacrificial beasts. The neglect of church symbol is characteristic of Verrocchio, who has not introduced in his monuments a single emblem of Christianity. The long-necked, female-faced griffins with spinous wings which support the basin, though, as has already been stated, imitated from the sarcophagus of Desiderio in the Church of S. Croce, are treated in so personal a manner and are introduced so frequently into his sculptures, that they have become almost a sign-manual of his work and that of his school.

There is no question but that the basin and projecting sculptures are the work of Verrocchio, and there is no reasonable ground for rejecting as his design the characteristic setting—the medallion of green serpentine, the falcon and the surrounding porphyry frame—which form so harmonious a background. It is true that the oak-leaves of the garland and the fluttering ribbons are somewhat mechanically arranged and lifeless in execution, and it is probable that these are the work of some assistant, but that the finely carved falcon in the lunette is by his own hand the trenchancy and energy of workmanship leave no doubt.

The Lavabô is less generally appreciated than its beauty and decorative excellence merit, partly, no doubt, that the restricted dimensions of the sacristy allow little apprehension of the general effect, which is noble, rich, and harmonious. For elegance of form and beauty of detail it ranks first among the many sacristy-fountains of Florentine sculpture; no small praise when we remember the dainty

Lavabô of the Badia of Fiesole and the masterpiece of Giovanni della Robbia in S. Maria Novella. The energy of touch in the carving of the spinous wings, the beauty of curve and vitality in the twisted tails that support the basin are unmatched even in Verrocchio's later work.

The approximate date of its execution is given by the device carved on the background—the Falcon and the scroll inscribed with the motto *SEMPER* entwined in the diamond ring. Both Falcon and motto were the personal device of Piero il Gottoso, chosen by him after his accession to power,\* and the date is therefore limited to the brief period of his rule between 1464 and 1469.

It was within the same period that Piero commissioned Verrocchio to design the simple Slab-Tomb of his father Cosimo. Like the Lavabô, this was formerly attributed to Donatello, and it was only on the discovery of Tommaso's Inventory that the authorship of Verrocchio was known. The entry is as follows: "Per la sepoltura di Chosimo appie del altare maggiore in S. Lorenzo." The date of its completion is certified from a record kept by one of the Canons of the Church, who states that on October 22, 1467, the body of Cosimo was interred in the new vault.

At the death of Cosimo il Vecchio, August 1, 1464, the Signoria projected a pompous monument to his memory, but could arrive at no agreement as to the form it should take, whether statue, chapel, or wall-tomb. The result of the first deliberation was merely the bestowal of the title

\* Piero chose the Diamond as symbolic of indomitable strength, which yields neither to hammer nor fire; the Ring and the motto *SEMPER* as symbolic of Eternity. Lorenzo added the Three Feathers as emblematic of the Cardinal Virtues. See Giovo, "Ragionamenti sopra i motti." Venezia, 1556, p. 32.

PATER PATRIAE, and the discussion as to the monument was deferred. In the following year, the public enthusiasm having subsided, Donato Acciaiuoli, in the name of the Signoria, relegated the charge of erecting a monument to the Medici family, at the same time specifying the site at the foot of the Altar of S. Lorenzo. This was on March 20, 1465, and it is probable that immediately after the deliberation Piero gave Verrocchio the commission for the Slab-Tomb.

It is uncertain whether the extreme simplicity of the tomb was due to Piero's appreciation of his father's dislike of pomp and show, or to his own desire to maintain the modest attitude of the dynasty, yet that it is in keeping with the character of Cosimo is undeniable. Just so would he, who refused Brunellesco's plans of the Pitti Palace as being too pompous a house for a simple citizen, have wished to be commemorated.

The design is, in fact, almost austere in its simplicity, and depends for effect only on the rich colours of the marbles and polished metal. The large square slab is of red porphyry inlaid with a geometrical pattern in white marble, and with medallions and ovals of green serpentine, the favourite material of Verrocchio. At the four corners are bright brass shields, in which the Medici balls are inserted in red porphyry. At the head is the inscription COSMVS MEDICES HIC SITVS EST DECRETO PVBLICO PATER PATRIAE, and at the foot VIXIT ANNOS LXXV MENSES III DIES XX, but the present lettering, though probably a faithful copy of the original, is of the sixteenth century. It is a marvel, considering the vicissitudes it has undergone owing to the vacillating attitude of the Republic towards the Medici, that any part of the original slab remains.

On November 22, 1495, the Signoria issued a decree that the inscription was to be effaced, because it bore the title (conferred by their own body thirty years before) *PATER PATRIAE*, "since such title was not merited by him, but rather that of tyrant."\* It is probable that the damage done on this occasion was confined to the erasure of the inscription, but in the riots of 1527 the slab was wantonly broken by the populace, and these breakages are plainly visible. They were repaired in 1532, when the Medici rule was restored, and the present inscriptions date from that year. It is not a fact, as is sometimes asserted, that no part of Verrocchio's original slab remains. The restorations are easily distinguishable by the fresher colour of the marbles, and show that the damage was comparatively insignificant.

Under the slab a flight of stairs leads to the vault, in which rests not only the sarcophagus of Cosimo but that of Donatello.

Verrocchio's principal work in S. Lorenzo—the Tomb of Piero and Giovanni dei Medici (Plates XVI. and XVII.)—is one of the most important monuments of the Renaissance. Of its date there is fortunately no question, 1472 being inscribed upon the base.

Tommaso, in his Inventory, mentions this tomb in the following words: "Per la sepoltura dj Piero e Giovannj de Medici." And a second later entry seems to show that the inscriptions on the Medallions were not included in the

\* 1495. November 22. "Deliberaverunt quod inscriptio sepulchri Cosme de Medicis in ede sancti Laurentii in pavimento propre altare majus, cujus talis est titulus: Cosmae Medici patri patriae omnino deleatur quia talis titulus non meruit sed potius tyrannus." (Arch. di Stato. Firenze, Delib. del 1495.)

original work : "Per intagliatura dj 80 lettere intagliate in su el serpentino in due tondj in detta sepoltura." \* These inscriptions are: on the back (only recently uncovered) PETRO . ET . IOHANNI . DE . MEDICIS . COSMI . PP . FF . ; and on the front facing the Sacristy, PET . VIX . AN . LIII . M . V . D . XV . IOHAN . AN . XLII . M . III . D . XXVIII . Round the base is carved in large letters, LAVRENTIVS ET IVL PETRI FF POSVER PATRI PATRIVOQVE MCCCCLXXII.

Of this monument Vasari writes :

In S. Lorenzo he executed in bronze the free-standing tomb of Giovanni and of Pier di Cosimo de' Medici, a sarcophagus of porphyry borne on four corners of bronze, with curved leaves most excellently wrought and finished with the utmost care; the which monument is placed between the Chapel of the Sacrament and the Sacristy.†

He goes on to praise the architectural ingenuity with which Verrocchio made the Sarcophagus fit into the aperture of the window connecting the two rooms, and to speak with enthusiasm of the realistic imitation of knotted cords which fill the empty space. Until quite recently the value of this architectural ingenuity could not be appreciated owing to an unsightly wooden screen erected between the Sacristy and the Chapel, which not only completely hid one-half of the work but destroyed the effect of the other. This has within the present year been removed, it is to be hoped permanently, for the gain to the monument is inestimable. The Sarcophagus stands out majestically in the sombre light, set in the elaborately carved and beau-

\* As a fact the letters are but seventy-two.

† Vasari, iii. 362. The Chapel of the Sacrament was in 1677 consecrated to the Virgin, and is now known as the Chapel of the Madonna.



*Alinari, Florence*

TOMB OF THE MEDICI. DETAIL. S. LORENZO, FLORENCE

*Face p. 78*



tiful framework. It is, in fact, seen to best advantage from the Chapel of the Madonna, where can be appreciated also the finely shaped shield bearing the Medici arms, which crowns the composition. This shield, suspended by ribbons from a marble bracket carved with acanthus leaves, is by Verrocchio himself, as the beauty of its curves and the sharp delicate work of the decoration shows.

The Sarcophagus is of Verrocchio's favourite red porphyry, with medallions of green serpentine. The lid is of white Carrara marble and porphyry. The bronze framework of acanthus leaves does not appear to have been gilded, as has been stated, for no trace can be found even in the interstices of the metal. The base is of white marble resting upon four bronze tortoises admirably modelled, and is inlaid with medallions of serpentine and porphyry in a design which resembles that of the Slab-Tomb of Cosimo. The aperture in which the Sarcophagus is placed is framed on both sides with a broad marble band, of which the Medici devices form the principal ornament. In detail these frameworks are of great beauty. From the vases at the base, delicately carved with dancing *putti* and the characteristic female-faced griffin, shoot strong stems with bunches of corn and fronds, each enclosed in the Medici Ring, set in which sharp-pointed diamonds cut upwards to where a great bronze Diamond forms the apex of the arch.

The decoration of the Sarcophagus itself, while in some measure imitating that of the Marsuppini Tomb of Desiderio in S. Croce, differs as widely as possible in its austerity from that beautiful yet redundant monument. The acanthus leaves are wrought with such sharpness and energy that they seem actually alive, curling fiercely like

the strong spinous leaves of the cactus. Never has foliage been treated with so trenchant a vigour. Dragon-like, the leaves seem to symbolise the power of the dynasty which bore as its motto "Strength Indomitable." In such a tomb, classic in its severity, might fitly rest the bones of some antique hero. There is no sign anywhere of Christian symbolism; even the inscription bears no religious reference. The Medici were a self-sufficient race, and the emblems are fitly chosen from their own devices.

The severity of the decoration is all the more remarkable in that epoch of elaborate monuments. The Tomb of Desiderio in S. Croce (1453) with its lavish ornament, that of Antonio Rossellino in S. Miniato (1461-66) with its *baroque* curtains and flying angels, had set the fashion in Florentine mortuary sculpture for a superabundance of decoration beside which the Tomb of Verrocchio seems harsh and austere. In addition to the elaborate carving, these monuments were brilliantly painted and gilded, while that of Verrocchio depends for colour on the material itself—the rich sombre colours of porphyry, ~~serpentine~~, and bronze. In comparison with the simple grandeur of this tomb, the overladen wall-monuments of the late fifteenth century seem trivial and insignificant.

The sole defect of the work, to which reference has already been made—that the Sarcophagus is conceived on too small a scale in its general lines—is more than counterbalanced by the grandeur of the detail. At a distance we might, perhaps, think of jewel-caskets and small goldsmiths' work; but standing close, and impressed, as we must be, by the fierce strength of the bronze foliage, the sharp ornament of the diamond, the power and trenchant energy of the treatment, no such idea would present itself.

In this Sarcophagus were placed in 1472 the bones of Piero il Gottoso and of his brother Giovanni, and an ancient writing records that all the people of Florence “flocked to see it as though it were a wonder of the world.”\* In it were laid later the bodies of Giuliano and of Lorenzo, and they remained there until 1559, in which year they were translated to the New Sacristy and placed in the sarcophagus beneath the Madonna of Michelangelo.

\* See Fabriczy, *Il Codice dell' Anonimo Gaddiano*. Firenze, 1893. Piero il Gottoso died 1469; Giovanni, his younger brother, 1463.

## CHAPTER VI

### WORK FOR THE MEDICI AND MALE BUSTS

By the discovery of Tommaso's Inventory, Verrocchio is revealed to us in a light hitherto unsuspected—as a painter of romantic allegory and a decorator of armour. We have the following entries: “Per lo stendardo per la giostra di Lorenzo.” “Per una dama dj rilievo ch'è posta in sul elmo.” “Per dipintura d'uno stendardo ch 1° spiritello per la giostra dj Guiliano.” “Per lo adornamento e aparato del ducha Ghaleazo.” None of these works remain, or at least have been hitherto discovered; but, thanks to contemporary descriptions, we are able to reconstruct in detail the paintings on the Standards of Lorenzo and Giuliano dei Medici.

The Joust of Lorenzo took place on February 7, 1469, in the Piazza before the Church of S. Croce. It was held in honour of his mistress, Lucrezia dei Donati, whose portrait, as will be seen presently, Verrocchio also painted. It was the custom for the knight to enter the lists preceded by a cavalier who bore his standard, and on this was painted some appropriate allegory, or the portrait of the lady whose colours he wore in some allegorical disguise. Fortunately for our knowledge of Verrocchio as a romantic painter, the Standard executed by him for Lorenzo is described by

Pulci in his poem commemorating the Tournament, and more fully still by an anonymous contemporary writer.\*

Pulci describes several of these Standards, which were of taffeta, white, crimson or purple, elaborately painted. On one was the figure of a lady clad in white, holding a garland of rose-leaves ; on another a nymph, who gathered in her hand the leaves of a beech-tree scattered by the tempest, to feed the doe by her side ; on a third, one clad in white and green, who quenched in a fountain the flaming darts of Love ; on a fourth, a lady in purple, breaking the arrows of Love and scattering the fragments in a meadow. The Standard of Lorenzo is thus described :

E mi pareva sentir sonar Miseno  
 Quando sul campo Lorenzo guignea  
 Sopra un caval che tremar fe il terreno :  
 E nel suo bel vesillo si vedea  
 Di sopra un sole e poi l'arcobaleno  
 Dove a lettere d' oro si leggea  
 " LE TEMS REVIENT " che puo interpretarsi  
 Tornare il tempo e' l secol rinnovarsi.

Il campo è paonazzo d' una banda  
 Dall' altra è bianco, e presso a uno alloro  
 Colei che per esempio il ciel ci manda  
 Delle bellezze dello eterno coro,  
 Ch' avea tessuta mezza una grillanda  
 Vestita tutta azzurro e be' fior d' oro :  
 Ed era questo alloro parte verde  
 E parte secco gia suo valor perde.†

\* For the facts given here, see C. von Fabriczy, " Andrea del Verrocchio al servizio de' Medici." (Arch. Stor. dell' Arte. Ser. II Ann. I. Fasc. iii.)

† " Meseemed I heard the roaring of Miseno as Lorenzo arrived on the field upon a steed whose paces shook the earth : and on his fair

The prose description of the anonymous writer enables us to reconstruct Verrocchio's painting in more detail :

Lo stendardo di taffetà bianco e pagonazzo con uno sole nella sommità, e sottovi un arco baleno ; e nel mezzo di detto stendardo v'era una dama ritta sur un prato, vestita di drappo alessandrino ricamato a fiori d' oro e d' ariento : e muovesi d' in sul campo pagonazzo uno ceppo d' alloro bianco : e la dama coglie di detto alloro e fanne una ghirlanda, seminandone tutto el campo bianco, e pel campo pagonazzo è seminato di rami d' alloro secco.\*

The lady was Lucrezia dei Donati, and the allegory of the dry bay-tree which sprouted fresh leaves, with the legend *LE TEMS REVIENT* was one of the many devices of Lorenzo.

In reading these descriptions we are reminded of Botticelli, the painter *par excellence* of such romantic themes, and had we not the evidence of Tommaso's Inventory, should never have suspected Verrocchio, the scientific and

standard might be seen, at the top a sun, and then the rainbow, where in gold letters might be read *LE TEMS REVIENT*, which is, interpreted, 'Time returns and the centuries are renewed.' "

" The field on one side is of purple, white on the other, and near to a bay-tree, she whom heaven sent us as sample of the beauty of the eternal choir, who, clad all in azure and beautiful gold flowers, had woven the half of a garland. And the bay-tree was partly green, and partly already dry and of no value."

\* "The Standard of white and purple taffeta surmounted by a sun and below it a rainbow ; and in the midst of the said standard there was a lady standing in a meadow clad in drappo alessandrino " (some Oriental stuff) " broidered with flowers of gold and silver : and upon the purple field there budded a branch of white bay : and the lady gathered of the said bay and made therewith a garland, sprinkling with it all the field of white, and the field of purple is sprinkled with branches of withered bay."

energetic sculptor, of the authorship of such dainty devices.

Not less romantic was the painting for the Standard of Giuliano, for the Joust held six years later, and of this also we are fortunate in possessing a detailed contemporary account. "For the painting of a Standard with a spirittello" (*i.e.* an amorino) "for the Joust of Giuliano" is Tommaso's entry. The Tournament was held in the Piazza S. Croce on Jan. 28, 1475 (N.S.). It was given by Giuliano in honour of his mistress Simonetta Cattaneo, wife of Marco Vespucci, known as "La Bella Simonetta." To commemorate this same Tournament, it will be remembered, Botticelli painted his "Primavera" or "Procession of Venus," in which Giuliano as Mars or Mercury leads the way, and where, in the staglike figure of the Primavera, we have possibly a portrait of Simonetta herself. Also to commemorate the Tournament, Poliziano wrote his poem, "La Giostra," but, owing to the tragic events that followed its commencement—the death in 1476 of Simonetta,\* and the murder in 1478 of Giuliano—it was never completed. It breaks off just at the place where we might have expected a description of the standards and accoutrements. Recently, however, a contemporary manuscript has been discovered in which seven of the standards, among them that of Giuliano, are minutely described.† That it was not the Standard of Giuliano himself that Verrocchio painted is proved by the description, for it bore a large figure of Pallas, and although there was also a blinded

\* She died of consumption at the age of nineteen.

† For these facts, see Giov. Poggi, "La Giostra Medicea del 1475." *L'Arte*, v. 1902, p. 71. The MSS. quoted is preserved in the Archivio di Stato, Florence.

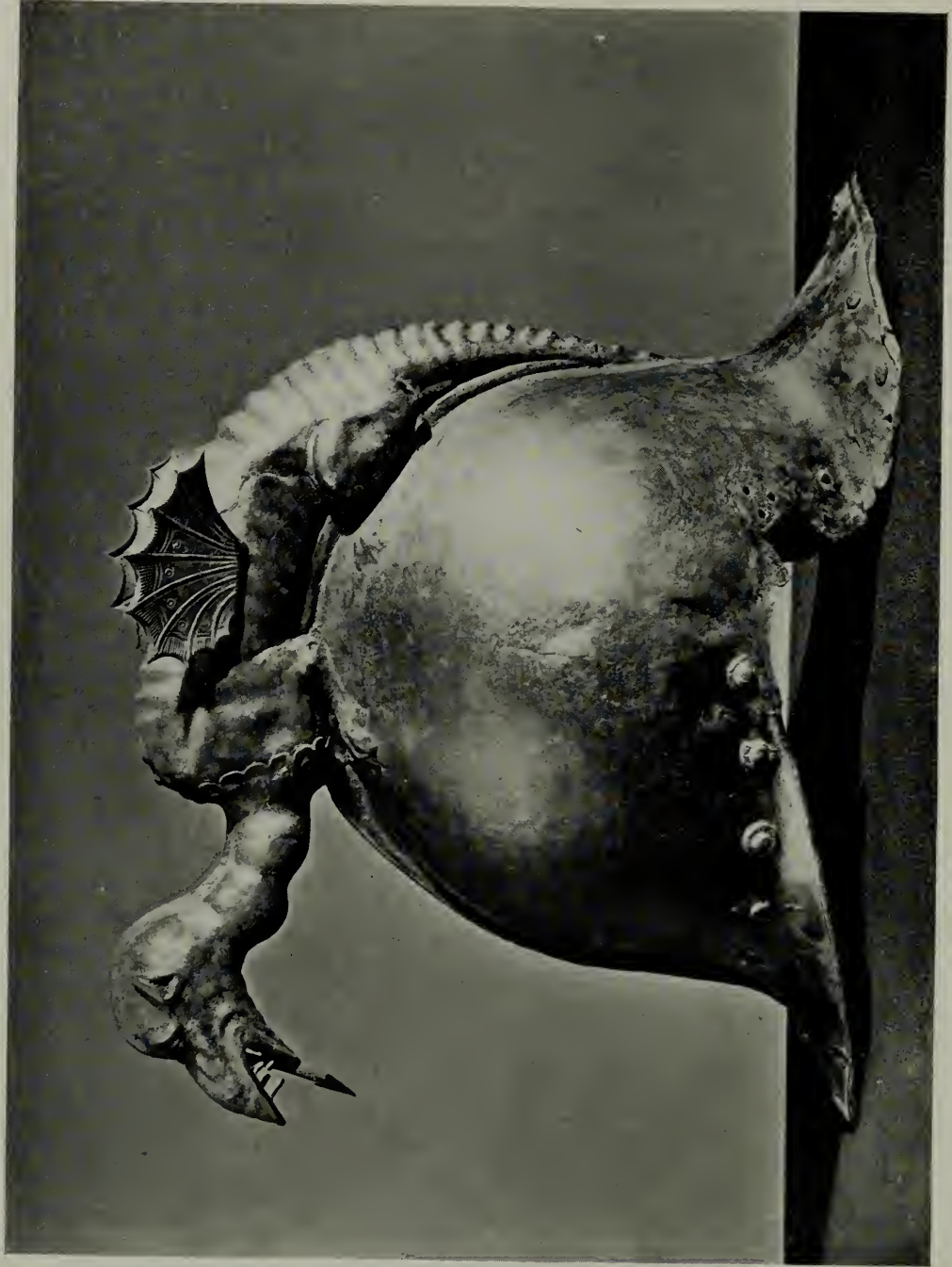
Love tied to an olive-tree, yet this *spiritello* must have occupied too subordinate a place in the design to correspond to the entry of Tommaso. Among the standards described however, that of one of Giuliano's followers, Giovanni di Papa Morelli, tallies sufficiently with the entry to allow the assumption that it was the lost work of Verrocchio. That it was paid for by the Medici and not by Morelli does not prevent identification with this standard, since it was the custom for the giver of the Tournament to present the less wealthy of his followers with their accoutrements. The description is as follows :

Portava (Giovanni di Papa Morelli) in mano un asta tucta rossa suvi uno stendardo di taffecta chermisi frappato e frangiato in torno che nella sommità era uno spiritello con archio alle spalle e turchasso allato : Laveva in mano uno vaso pieno di fiori di varii colori e quali gittava in grembo ha una ninfa vestita di biancho ombreggiata d' oro cum capegli avolti la quale si sedeva sopra uno scoglio che usciva d' un prato adorno di varii fiori et aveva legato uno scudo da giostra a uno olivo era in su decta prato. Et in mano teneva le treccie dello scudo e tucte le fioriva di quelli le aveva gittati lo spiritello.\*

This is the only standard described in the MSS. in which the *spiritello* holds the most important place.

\* " He bore in his hand a pole all of red, and thereon a standard of crimson taffeta scalloped and fringed all round, and at the top was a *spiritello* with a bow upon his shoulders and a quiver by his side, and he bore in his hand a vase filled with flowers of various colours, which he cast into the lap of a nymph clad in white veiled with gold, wrapped in her hair, who sat upon a rock that emerged from a meadow decked with various flowers, and she had tied a jousting shield to an olive-tree that was in the said meadow, and in her hand she held the ribbons of the shield and beflowered them all over from those which the *spiritello* had cast to her."





*Alinari, Florence*

GALA HELMET. BARGELLO, FLORENCE

The next entry in Tommaso's Inventory refers evidently to some gala helmet executed by Verrocchio, probably for the same Tournament. "For a lady in relief that is upon the helmet." \* No helmet answering to this description is to be found in the remains of the Medici Armoury. Signor Gaetano Milanese, however, mentions that Verrocchio executed some small figures in silver for the helmet of Lorenzo to be worn at the Joust of Giuliano,† which may possibly be connected with this entry, but with the carelessness so frequent in his citations, he leaves us in tantalising uncertainty as to the source of his information. It is, however, certain that he must have discovered some authority for the statement among the documents in his charge.

But although the helmet in question is not forthcoming, among the numerous relics of the Medicean Armoury in the Bargello is a casque of beaten iron surmounted by a dragon, which from the character of the design and the excellence and energy of the workmanship may with little hesitation be accepted as the work of Verrocchio (Plate XVIII). In form, and especially in the treatment of the wings, the dragon bears a strong resemblance to that carved by Donatello on the relief of the Tabernacle of S. George of Or S. Michele. Supple and strong, its lines admirably adapted to the beautiful curves of the casque, the work is evidently that of a master of decorative form as well as

\* Dr. von Fabriczy suggests that the word "dama" in the entry may be read "daina"—*i.e.* doe, since in these writings the "i" is frequently undotted. It seems, however, more likely to have been the figure or head of some nymph.

† "Lavorò Andrea alcune figurette d'argento per l'elmo di Lorenzo il Magnifico in occasione della celebre giostra cantata dal Poliziano." (Vasari, iii. 361, note 2.)

of metal work. The spine and skull are indicated with Verrocchio's special feeling for bone, and the wings, originally imitated from Donatello, are the same which we find on all his griffins. Nothing in this Museum, nor in the immense collection of fifteenth-century armour in the possession of Mr. Stibbert, Florence, equals this helmet for beauty of design or for workmanship.

The "adornamento e aparato del ducha Ghaleazo," mentioned by Tommaso, must have been some arms and accoutrements presented by Lorenzo to Galeazzo Sforza on the occasion of his visit to Florence with his wife, Bona di Savoia, in March 1471. He was the guest of Lorenzo in the Palazzo Medici, and the festivities held in his honour were notorious for their splendour and extravagance, he and Lorenzo vying with each other as to which could show the greatest magnificence.

The style of Verrocchio's armour decoration may be judged by the breastplate of his terra-cotta bust of Giuliano dei Medici, in the collection of M. Gustave Dreyfus, Paris, one of the finest and most characteristic of his works (Plate XIX). Judging by the apparent age of the prince, it cannot be placed at a much earlier date than that of the Tournament (1475), and possibly represents him in the gala armour worn on that occasion.\* If the breastplate is copied from that actually worn by Giuliano, as seems most likely, it must have been wrought by Verrocchio himself, for the decorations are in the highest degree characteristic of his style. The Medusa head, though imitated from those on the breastplates of Roman Emperors, he has made by his peculiar treatment personal

\* Giuliano was born in 1453 and was therefore twenty-two at the date of the Joust.



GIULIANO DEI MEDICI. COLLECTION OF M. GUSTAVE DREYFUS, PARIS  
(By kind permission of Dr. Bode)







LORENZO DEI MEDICI. SCULPTOR UNKNOWN. COLLECTION OF  
MR. QUINCY SHAW, BOSTON, U.S.A.

(By kind permission of Dr. Bode)

and original. The heads on the antique armour, and on the ægis of Athene, are mild compared to the fierce mask with gaping mouth of Verrocchio's Gorgon ; and so is the winged head carved by Donatello on the breastplate of the Gattamelata. The face is splendidly modelled, with the usual emphasis of bone, and the whole decoration of the armour—the sharp-pointed fronds of the shoulder-pieces, the fringe and other ornaments—are executed with his accustomed trenchant energy.

On account of its vigour and a certain truculence characteristic of Antonio Pollaiuolo, the bust has been sometimes attributed to him ; but, in spite of the absence of documentary evidence, there can be no doubt of Verrocchio's authorship. Besides the above-mentioned peculiarities of the armour, the hair is treated in his usual manner, with the luxuriant curls indicated in strong spiral curves. The curved lips resemble those of the David, and the eyeballs and lids are treated in precisely the same manner. The superb force of the Colleoni is foreshadowed in the poise of the head and the arrogant expression.

It is impossible to accept as more than school-work the bust of Lorenzo in the collection of Mr. Quincy Shaw, Boston, usually attributed to Verrocchio (Plate XX). The bust is, unfortunately, known to me only through the photograph, but the mediocre quality of the work is easily seen. The coarsely-modelled, flaccid face, in which there is no indication of bone ; the long dead lines of the hair ; the lack of energy in the expression of the face and in the execution, point to the authorship of some weak imitator. It must have been a feeble artist who could interpret the concentration and force of Lorenzo thus tamely and

insipidly. In the best portraits that exist of him—that of the Pazzi medal, and the superb death-mask of the Confraternity of the Colombario—the face, with its compressed lips, stern brow and powerful jaw, might serve as the embodiment of physical and intellectual force. And these qualities Verrocchio was of all artists most capable of appreciating and interpreting with the sympathy of a similar temperament, as he has known how to interpret the less thoughtful but equally audacious character of Giuliano. Let the reader compare the two busts and judge whether it be possible that they are the work of the same hand.

The decorations of the armour on the bust of Lorenzo are equally feeble, though imitating superficially the fierce forms of Verrocchio. The Medusa heads on the shoulders are ill modelled, the lines of hair and wing without vigour, and the expression is merely grotesque. Above all, the characteristic female-faced griffins, imitated from the decoration of Verrocchio, in spite of their spinous wings and serpent tails, suggest two scratching barndoor fowls rather than the allegorical monster so superbly conceived by Verrocchio.

The marble relief of a warrior inscribed with the name of Scipio, formerly in the collection of M. Rattier, now in the Louvre, is also attributed by some critics to Verrocchio. Once given to Leonardo himself, it is now, with better judgment, officially labelled merely as Florentine work of the fifteenth century.\* It is one of the many imitations of Verrocchio's warrior which became so popular among the Florentine artists towards the end of the century, and has

\* There is an unaccountable tendency among some critics of note to restore the attribution to Leonardo.

much beauty of workmanship in the details of the armour. The dragon, with its strong wings and fiercely-twisted tail, and the spiral decorations of the helmet, are worthy of Verrocchio's own hand ; but the sculptor has bestowed more attention on the ornaments of the armour than on the face, which is weak and insignificant, and, like that of a lay-figure in an armoury, is lost between the elaborate helmet and breastplate. Of such sacrifice of the essential an artist of Verrocchio's quality would never have been guilty, even were he capable of modelling the human face with so little science.

Such typical heads of antique heroes, however, Verrocchio did execute, though none have yet been discovered.

"He made," writes Vasari, "two heads of metal ; one of Alexander the Great in profile, the other of Darius according to his fancy, in half relief and each different, varying one from the other in the helmet, in the armour, and in every detail ; both of which were sent by the Magnifico Lorenzo to the King Mattia Corvino in Hungary with many other things." \*

It is probable that the Scipio was an imitation of some such relief, and that the details of the armour, which are so close to his style, were exactly reproduced. Many such heads of warriors bearing strong traces of Verrocchio's influence exist in Florentine sculpture, testifying to the existence of some important original which had acquired great popularity. Among the best of such imitations are two reliefs in glazed terra-cotta—one in the Museo di Maiolica, Pesaro, modelled with an energy rarely found in

\* Vasari, iii. 361.

the later productions of the Robbia *fabbrica*, the other in the Berlin Museum.

It is equally impossible to accept as the work of Verrocchio the terra-cotta bust No. 165 of the Bargello (Plate XXI). This portrait was formerly attributed to Antonio Pollaiuolo, but is now officially, without interrogation mark, inscribed with the name of Verrocchio. The want of energy, the poor modelling and general feebleness of the work are sufficient reasons for rejecting it as by either master. The face is superficial in modelling, with no feeling for the structure of bone and muscle; the shoulders are especially poor in form, and the arms are indicated with a want of science impossible to these students of anatomy. The bust represents, according to the catalogue, Piero, the eldest son of Lorenzo dei Medici, who was not born till 1471. As the face is that of a youth of at least seventeen or eighteen years of age, and as Verrocchio died in 1488, those who claim it as his work must place it in the very last year of his life—the year of the Colleoni. It is inconceivable that the hand which modelled that masterpiece of vigorous life and energy should at the same date have executed this feeble work, which may possibly be by Antonio Pollaiuolo's weak imitator, his brother Piero.

Two other male busts in terra-cotta are with as little reason attributed to Verrocchio—one in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, No. 4407; the other—evidently a copy of this—in the Berlin Museum. They represent a youth who bears much resemblance in feature to the Page in Verrocchio's Silver Relief, and the hair is arranged in his peculiar manner, smooth and carefully parted, and falling in luxuriant clusters. That in the South Ken-



*Alinari, Florence*

BUST OF PIERO DI LORENZO DEI MEDICI (?) BY PIERO POLLAIUOLO (?)  
BARGELLO, FLORENCE

*Face p. 92*



sington Museum is the better modelled and more important of the two, but, in spite of the superficial resemblance to Verrocchio's work, neither can be accepted as more than that of one of his disciples—possibly Lorenzo di Credi, with whose flaccid style they have much in common.

## CHAPTER VII

### WORK FOR THE MEDICI—DEATH-MASKS, ETC.

AN entry in Tommaso's Inventory, "Per lo gnudo rosso," would have little meaning for us were it not for the record of Vasari, by which we are able to connect it with the restoration of an antique statue of Marsyas in red marble which formerly decorated the garden of the Palazzo Medici. He tells us that Cosimo il Vecchio possessed a beautiful white marble statue of Marsyas tied to a tree, which was placed on one side of the door of the garden or *cortile* which gave on the Via de' Ginori, and that Lorenzo, having received a still finer specimen of the same subject in red marble, and wishing to place it on the other side as a pendant, ordered Verrocchio to restore the missing parts, who added the legs, thighs and arms to the great satisfaction of Lorenzo. Both original statue and the restorations were executed in reddish stone, worked by the sculptors with so much ingenuity as to appear the natural colour of the flayed flesh, on which the white veins of the marble seemed the bared nerves.

Unfortunately no trace can be found of this work so highly praised by Vasari. It was at one time supposed that the Marsyas of purple marble in the corridor of the Uffizi was the statue restored by Verrocchio, in spite of the

fact that the restorations do not correspond with those described by Vasari, being, not of the legs and thighs, but of the head, shoulders, and arms. These puny and ill-shaped arms, moreover, are modelled with no science and little skill, and the character of the work is not that of Verrocchio, but of some late imitator of Michelangelo. The purple-fleshed statue of the Uffizi is probably that presented by Don Virginio Orsini to the Grand Duke Francesco I. in 1586, of which we have record in a letter from the Bishop of Cortona to the Secretary of the Grand Duke, giving notice of the despatch by sea of several works of marble, among them a "*Marsia scorticata*."\* Greater probability is lent to this identification by the style of the restorations, which seem to belong to this epoch.

We know also from the following extract that the statue restored by Verrocchio was not hanging but seated. Johann Fichard, Counsellor of Frankfurt-am-Main, writing the history of his travels in Italy in 1536, thus describes the "*gnudo rosso*," then restored to its original place in the garden of the Palazzo Medici, from which it had been removed at the expulsion of the family to decorate the Palazzo Vecchio.†

Item, at that gate by which we go to the public street (Via dei Ginori), is placed on either side a marble statue of the flayed Marsyas, and that on the left hangs by his arms, as you have seen in the hanging gardens of Cardinal della Valle,

\* See Milanesi. Vasari, iii. 367, note 1.

† "Item domini . . . deliberavunt quod . . . due statue conciatorum de lapidibus marmoreis, sive alterius misture que sunt in orto predicto (domus Pieri de Medicis) penes portam . . . debeant per eos ad quos pertinet consignari spectabilibus officialibus operariis palatii dominorum." (Müntz, *Les Collections des Médicis au XV<sup>e</sup> Siècle*, p. 103.)

Rome; that on the right is seated, with his arms, however, tied upwards, and the figure is of porphyry stone, in which the colour of the flayed Marsyas is wonderfully reproduced.\*

Curiously enough, the hanging Marsyas mentioned here by Fichard as having been seen by him in the gardens of the Cardinal Della Valle, found its way later to the Medici Collection, and is now in the Corridor of the Uffizi, facing the purple marble statue. It was bought in 1584 by Cardinal Ferdinando dei Medici with the Collections of Cardinals Capranica and Della Valle. Of neither of the statues which decorated the garden of the Palazzo Medici have we any trace.

For the Palazzo Medici also Verrocchio executed certain decorations of a perplexing nature, of which no record exists save in the entry of Tommaso's Inventory, "Per achonciatura dj tutte le teste chotalie che sono sopra a gli uscj del chortile in Firenze"—"For the adornment of all those heads that are above the doorway of the courtyard in Florence." In what this "acconciatura"—*i.e.* adornment of the head—consisted, we have no means of arriving at any certainty. We are about to speak of a strange phase of Florentine taste in decoration—the lugubrious custom of ornamenting private dwellings with the death-masks of deceased members of the family—but whether the heads over the entrance of the *cortile* in the Palazzo Medici

\* "Item ad eam portam qua in viam publicam egredimur, utrinque et posita Marsii excoriati simulacrum marmoreum, et sinistrum quidem ex brachiis dependet (quale vidisti et in pensili horto Cardinalis de la Valle, Romæ), dextrum vero sedat, brachiis tamen sursum delegatis. Et est ex lapide porphyro quo colore mire refertur ipsuis excoriati Marsiæ forma." (Joh. Fichard, Italia, 1536. Quoted by Schmarsow. Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft, 1891, xiv. p. 378.)

were some such decoration, and the "*acconciatura*" refers to some addition to them of hair or bay crowns, is at best conjectural.

Later, in Tommaso's Inventory, we read of "*Ventj maschere ritratte al naturale*"—"Twenty masks portrayed from the life," to the nature of which Vasari and other writers give the clue. According to Vasari, Verrocchio was one of the first to take death-masks, and casts in *gesso* from nature, of hands, feet, and limbs, to aid him in his studies of the human frame, but he is mistaken in supposing the custom to be of so late a date, since we know that casts taken in *gesso* from the faces of the dead were made much earlier. That of Brunellesco, for example, now in the Opera del Duomo, was made by Andrea Cavalcanti when Verrocchio was still a child. But since he seems to have given fresh impulse to the fashion, and since it is significant of the phase of realism through which, following his lead, Florentine art was passing, the record of Vasari, lengthy though it be, is worth quoting:

Andrea took much pleasure in making out of plaster for casting, of that kind of plaster which is made of a soft stone quarried in Volterra and Siena, and in many other places in Italy; the which stone baked in the fire, and then pounded and made into paste with tepid water, becomes so soft, that all that is desired can be done with it, and after, it solidifies and grows so hard that the entire figure can be cast from it. Andrea, then, used to cast in moulds so made, natural objects, in order with more facility to keep them before him and imitate them; that is to say, hands, feet, knees, legs, arms, and trunks. Later in his time the fashion was begun of casting the heads of those who died at a small expense; so that one sees in every house in Florence, above the chimneys, doorways, windows and entablatures an infinite number of

such portraits, so well made and natural that they appear to be alive. And from that time has been and is still followed the said practice, which has been of great use to us in preserving the portraits of many, which are placed in the *Storie* of Duke Cosimo.\*

It is most likely that the twenty heads above the doorway of the Medici Palace, as well as those adorned by Verrocchio, were some such death-masks, but not one of them remains, and it is even difficult for us to realise the effect of so grim a form of decoration. In the catalogue of the bronzes and marbles from Lorenzo's collection, seized by the Signoria in 1495 for the decoration of the hall of the Palazzo Vecchio, we read of "eight heads which were over the entrance of the Loggia" (of the Palazzo Medici in Via Larga), and of six others "which were in the garden over the entrance."† It seems probable that these heads were some of the masks executed by Verrocchio, but of their present whereabouts we have no knowledge. In the Inventory of Lorenzo taken after his death in 1492 we read also of "a head of marble above the entrance of the ante-chamber in free relief, portrayed from the life, of Giovanni di Cosimo dei Medici."‡ If this was one of Verrocchio's twenty masks, it must have been executed in the year 1463, the date of Giovanni's death.

A magnificent specimen of such death-masks in terracotta is preserved in the hall of the Società Colombaria,

\* Vasari, iii. 372, &c. The words are repeated with little variation in his "Ragionamenti," Giorn. Sec., p. 67.

† "viii. teste che erano sopra l'usci delle loggie. . . . Sei teste che erano nell' orto sopra gl' usci." (Müntz, *Les Collections des Médicis*.)

‡ "Una testa di marmo sopra l'uscio dell' antichamera di tutto rilievo ritratto al naturale di Giovanni di Cosimo de' Medici," f. 25. (*Op. cit.* p. 85.)

Via dei Bardi, Florence. It is of Lorenzo dei Medici, and must, therefore, have been executed after the death of Verocchio, but from the force of modelling and splendid energy of the work would seem to be by Antonio Pollaiuolo.\*

To what a pitch realism was carried at this time in the Florentine School of sculpture this further extract from Vasari shows. "Hence," he continues, proceeding with his remarks on the art of casting in *gesso*,

"came to be made figures of greater perfection, not only in Florence but in all the parts where are devout persons, and where they assemble to offer votive images and *miracoli* as they are called, in gratitude for some favour received.† Therefore, where first they were made small in silver, or only in wood, or else of wax, and exceedingly clumsy, in the time of Andrea they began to make them in a much better manner; for he, being in close intimacy with the wax-worker Orsini,‡ who had a very great reputation in that craft in Florence, he began to show him how he might excel in it. Therefore on the occasion of the death of Giuliano dei Medici and the danger of Lorenzo his brother, wounded in S. Maria del Fiore, it was commanded by the friends and relatives of Lorenzo, rendering thanks to God for his safety, that images of him should be made in many places. Whence Orsini among others, with the help and under the orders of Andrea, executed three in wax as large as life, making within the framework of wood, as is elsewhere said, interwoven with split canes, then covered with waxed cloth with most beautiful folds, and so becomingly that nothing could be better nor

\* For a fine photogravure of this little known death-mask, see the Frontispiece to Mrs. Ross' "Florentine Villas" (Dent & Co., 1903), where it is reproduced for the first time.

† I.e. models of some limb, &c., miraculously restored by prayer.

‡ Orsini Benintendi, one of a family of wax-image makers, who were called on that account Fallimagini.

more lifelike. Then the heads, the hands and feet he made of wax, thicker but hollow within, and portrayed from the life, and painted in oil with such adornment of hair and other things as was necessary, so natural and well-made that they seemed no longer men of wax, but full of life, as may be seen in each of the three ; one of which is in the Church of the nuns of Chiarito in Via di S. Gallo, before the Crucifix which works miracles. And this figure is in the very dress that Lorenzo wore when, wounded in the throat and bandaged, he showed himself at the window of his house to be seen of the people, who had run thither to see if he were alive as they hoped, or if dead to avenge him. The second figure of the same is in magisterial robes, the civil habit peculiar to the Florentines ; and this is in the Church of the Servi of the Annunziata above the small door which is near the bench where candles are sold. The third was sent to S. Maria degli Angeli of Assisi and set before that Madonna ; in which place, as has already been said, Lorenzo dei Medici caused all the road to be paved that leads from S. Maria to the Gate of Assisi that goes to S. Francesco, and likewise restored the fountains that Cosimo, his ancestor, had caused to be made in that place.

“ But to return to the images of wax, all those are by the hand of Orsini which in the said Church of the Servi bear for signature at the bottom a large O with an R within it and a cross above, and all are so beautifully made that few since executed can be compared with them. This art, although it still exists up to our own day, is nevertheless rather in decline than otherwise, either because the devotion is lacking, or for some other reason.” \*

It is curious to think of the severe Verrocchio lending his genius to work so inartistic as must have been these clothed dolls. Although the production of such figures

\* Vasari, iii. 373, &c.

was begun long before the birth of Verrocchio, yet since he seems to have been instrumental in developing the industry, a few details on the subject will not be out of place.

Already as early as the beginning of the fifteenth century the Church of Or S. Michele was so encumbered by these images that the Signoria issued a decree (January 1, 1401) forbidding any further addition excepting of those of the chief personages of the State. The Church of the Servi, the SS. Annunziata, was, however, the favourite depository, and in 1630 there were no less than 600 life-sized figures, many of them on horseback; 22,000 votive images of *papier mâché*, and 3600 miracle pictures! In 1447 two large shelves had to be let in to the walls of the transept in order to accommodate them, and on these, to the annoyance of the owners of the chapels thus hidden, were ranged the most important of the images, several on horseback.\* The interior of the church

\* For these facts see Warburg's "Bildniskunst und Florentinisches Bürgertum," Leipzig. He cites the following extract from "Notizie delle cose memorabili del Convento e Chiesa della Nunziata": "1447. In questo tempo si comincia a fare in chiesa e' palchi per mettervi l'imagini. M<sup>o</sup> Tano di Bart<sup>o</sup> e M<sup>o</sup> Franc<sup>o</sup> furno e maestri che gli feciono e M<sup>o</sup> Chimenti dipintore fu quello gli dipinse, insieme con quegli di S<sup>o</sup> Bastiano e questo fu fatto per la multitude de' voti e imagini che erono offerte e per acrescer la devotione a quegli che venivano a questa S<sup>ma</sup> Nuntiata perche 'l veder tanti miracoli per sua intercessione da N. Signor' Idio fatti, faceva che ne' loro bisogni a lei ricorrevano: onde in questi tempi medesimi furno fatti palchi per tenervi sopra homini ill<sup>mi</sup> a cavallo tutti devoti di questa gran' madre. Erono dua palchi uno alla destra l'altro alla sinistra avanti alla tribuna. Ma nuovamente havendo uno fatto un poco di frontispitio d'orpello avanti la cappella de' Falconieri non gli parendo fussi veduto a suo modo, persuase alcuni padri che gl' era buono levar qual palco, e metter que' cavalli tutti dall' altra parte; cosi rimase quelle parte spogliata, e

must have been like a collection of waxworks. Not only were the nobles of Florence represented in all kinds of costumes, but illustrious personages of other countries. Thus Christian, King of Denmark, passing through the city in 1471, presented a life-sized image of himself to the church, as did also a Turkish Pasha, who, in spite of Islamism, desired the prayers of the Christians for his safe return to Constantinople.\* Later were added those of Leo X., Alexander VI. and Clement VII., in pontifical vestments; and there were also figures of distinguished ladies in Court robes, among which we know to have been that of Isabella d'Este, Marchioness of Mantua.† If we may believe the novelist Sacchetti, even wax images of cats lost and restored to their owners in answer to prayer formed part of the collection of Or S. Michele.‡

In 1665 all the images collected in the SS. Annunziata were removed from the church to the small cloister, much to the regret of Del Migliore, who could not conceive, he says, what the monks had in their minds "to despoil the church of so rich furniture which augmented and gave impulse to the devotion of the people." At the end of the eighteenth century some few surviving figures were still to be seen in the cloister, but not one now remains in Florence. From an artistic point of view, perhaps the loss is not great. We, who possess in our own Abbey

senza proportione dell' altra. Idio gli perdoni!" (Archivio di Stato. Firenze. Annunziata, No. 59, a. c. 11.)

\* Del Migliore, "Firenze città nobilissima illustrata," 1684.

† A document preserved in the Archives of the Church orders the repair of the wax figures of Isabella d'Este and of Alexander VI.

‡ "E io scrittore vidi già uno ch' avea perduto una gatta, botarsi, se la ritrovasse, mandarla di cera a Nostra Donna d'Orto San Michele, e così fece." Novella 109.

the counterparts of such images clad in the clothes worn by the dead personages, know that their value is historical and sentimental rather than æsthetic. One wonders, nevertheless, at the total disappearance of so great a quantity, and regrets especially Orsini's figures of Lorenzo dei Medici executed under the direction of Verrocchio.

## CHAPTER VIII

### FEMALE PORTRAITS

ONE of the most beautiful portraits of the fifteenth century is that of a lady in the collection of Prince Lichtenstein, Vienna. It represents a young girl presumably of about twenty, with a typically Florentine face, interesting rather than strictly beautiful, set against a bush of juniper, whose sharp needles accentuated against the sky contrast in the manner peculiar to Verrocchio with the curves of the tendril-like curls on the cheeks and the tranquil sweetness of the expression. The panel has been much shortened, and it is probable that, like the *Mona Lisa* of Leonardo, the hands of the sitter originally rested before her on a balustrade. The fact of this truncation is ascertained by the existence on the back of a decorative painting, formerly in the centre of the panel, but of which in its present state the lower part is missing. It represents a branch of juniper tied with a scroll, on which is inscribed the motto *VIRTVTEM FORMA DECORAT*, framed in branches of bay and palm, on a background painted in imitation of porphyry. This decoration is cut off just below the scroll, which was originally in the centre, and the measurements show that as much as from twenty-five to thirty centimetres of the panel is missing. The damage to the picture is greater



*Hans Holbein the Younger, Munich*

PORTRAIT OF LADY. COLLECTION OF PRINCE LICHTENSTEIN, VIENNA

*Face p. 104*



than the mere loss of the hands, for in its present state the composition is too square and stunted.\*

As to the authorship of this portrait there have been, and still are, wide differences of opinion. In the early catalogue of the collection made by Falke it was attributed to Sodoma, and Waagen was the first to suggest that it was by Leonardo, with whose name it has been since officially inscribed. Waagen's attribution, however, was made doubtfully and with the suggestion that, if not by the Master himself, it might at least be by one of his best pupils, possibly Boltraffio.† The hypothesis of Verrocchio's authorship is due to Morelli,‡ and has since been more or less generally accepted by the critics. Of recent times, however, several of the most important students of Verrocchio, headed by Dr. Bode, have given their verdict in favour of Leonardo, Dr. Bode identifying it, for reasons which it is worth while to consider, with the portrait painted by him of Ginevra dei Benci, mentioned by the Anonimo Magliabecchiano and Vasari.§ He bases his theory, first, on a resemblance he finds in the features of the lady to a portrait inscribed with the name of Ginevra dei Benci in the possession of the Marchese Pucci, Florence, which he considers to be a free copy of the Lichtenstein

\* For the details of this back painting and the illustration, see Bode, "Leonardo's Bildnis der Ginevra dei Benci." *Zeitschrift für Bildende-kunst*, 1903, p. 274.

† Waagen, "Kunstdenkmälern zu Wien," p. 276.

‡ Morelli, "Die Galerie zu Berlin," p. 37.

§ Ginevra, daughter of Amerigo dei Benci, died 1473. It is therefore beyond doubt that the figure in Ghirlandaio's fresco in S. Maria Novella, painted 1486-1490, is not, as is popularly supposed, a portrait of her. If, as Dr. Bode claims, the Lichtenstein Portrait is the missing Leonardo, it must have been painted by him at or before the age of twenty-one.

painting ; and, secondly, on the fact that she is painted against a background of juniper—*Ginepro*—a branch of the same shrub forming also the chief motive in the decoration on the back of the panel, presumably introduced as a play on her name. It must be owned that the importance given to the juniper seems to warrant the theory that at least the lady bore the name Ginevra, but that the portrait is by Leonardo the character of the work entirely contradicts.

It would be a wearisome reiteration of the arguments already adduced in favour of Verrocchio's authorship of the Angels of the Baptism and of the Uffizi Annunciation were the reasons for attributing this portrait to him rather than to Leonardo insisted on in detail, but at the risk of repetition a few of the most important must be stated. That it is by the same hand as these there is too much similarity of form and line, and in the treatment of foliage and landscape, to allow the shadow of a doubt, and it bears even to a greater degree than these the peculiar qualities of Verrocchio's work.

Verrocchio's manner of constructing the face is, as has been pointed out, peculiar to himself, as individual as are his oval *contours*, subtle modelling and soft shadows, to Leonardo. The square face, with its suggestion of hard bone and rather tightly-strained skin, its broad forehead and wide-winged nostrils, is in the highest degree characteristic of Verrocchio, while we may search in vain among the authentic works of Leonardo for its counterpart. The somewhat dry painting, the stiff pose, the hard lines of the eyes and brows, as well as the treatment of the hair, is in the style of the older generation, trained in the first half of the century rather than in the more facile methods of





*Alinari, Florence*

BUST OF LADY. BARGELLO, FLORENCE

*Face p. 107*

the second. The technique is without that fluency of brushwork of the artists of Leonardo's generation accustomed from childhood to the freer methods of the oil medium.

In spirit as in technique the portrait has none of the character of Leonardo's work. The tranquil face, with its simple straightforward glance, is without any suggestion of the subtlety and mystery never absent from Leonardo's female heads.

The strongest proof of Verrocchio's authorship, however, is the striking resemblance it bears to the marble bust of a lady in the Bargello (Plate XXIII), until recently undisputed as his authentic work ; a resemblance so great that the impossibility of attributing one without the other to Leonardo has compelled one of the critics, though apparently with some misgivings, to claim the bust also as his work.\*

It is one of the greatest injustices of art-criticism that Verrocchio's merits as an artist should be gauged by the standard of work executed, not by him, but by inferior imitators. By this false standard all that in his sculpture and painting shows pre-eminent imaginative power or beauty is attributed to Leonardo on the ground that it is beyond the capability of Verrocchio. Thus Crowe and Cavalcaselle drew the conclusion that he must have received the aid of Leonardo in the statue of the Putto with the Dolphin, on account of its great beauty—a suggestion reprinted by Cavalcaselle in the last edition of the book.† Dr. Mackowsky, in attributing the marble bust of

\* Mackowsky, "Verrocchio," p. 46.

† Cavalcaselle e Crowe, "Storia della Pittura." Firenze, 1894, vi, 181,

the Bargello to Leonardo, observes: "There is in these hands a spiritual beauty (*"seelenvolle Anmut"*) such as Verrocchio even in the most beautiful of his Madonnas has not succeeded in expressing." Yet it is these "wonderfully shaped hands with the long pointed fingers" of the Bargello bust which are specially characteristic of Verrocchio, his chosen type repeated in every detail of form and construction in all his authentic works. Let the reader compare them with those of the bronze David, of the terra-cotta Madonna (Plate XXVIII), or indeed with any authentic work of equal finish. These large, strong, aristocratic hands with the filbert-shaped nails, are as peculiar to Verrocchio as is his treatment of draperies and hair. Dr. Mackowsky's statement of his inability to find, "even in the most beautiful Madonna of Verrocchio," the same beauty and distinction, reminds us that he accepts as his work a group of paintings which will be considered later, in which the hands are as remarkable for their feeble and mannered construction as are those executed by Verrocchio for their beauty and truth to nature—hands of which the palm is disproportionately broad and the thumb is bent back almost to a semicircle. The only existing Madonna either in painting or sculpture by Verrocchio is, as will presently be seen, the terra-cotta relief of the Bargello (Plate XXVIII), and with the hand of this Madonna those of the marble bust have everything in common. As has already been said, Verrocchio, of all the Quattrocento artists, not even excepting Luca della Robbia, understood best the structure of the hand and best appreciated its beauty and power of expression. He has combined in all the hands executed by him delicacy and strength in admirable proportion, and has given to them an expressiveness

which sometimes, as in the marble bust in question and in the Group of Or S. Michele, diverts the attention almost unduly from the faces. "Vivono d'una vita così luminosa che il resto della figura n'è oscurato," one of our greatest living writers has said of the hands of this bust in eulogy of their expressiveness.\* The youthful vigour of the sinewy hand of the David, the aristocratic delicacy of those of the Madonna and the marble bust, the strength and grip of those of the Colleoni, indicate almost equally with the faces the characters of the personages portrayed.

Closely as the marble bust resembles the Lichtenstein portrait, the likeness is stylistic only, for the difference of feature and expression proves that they do not represent the same lady. In the bust the face is squarer, the chin firmer and broader, the eyebrows are thicker and the hair grows lower on the forehead. The expression is subtler and less placid. The face is marvellously alive and sensitive, with the suggestion of an evanescent emotion, half of surprise, difficult to analyse in words. It is a face typically Florentine in its squareness of cheek and jaw and the accentuation of bone, and it is interesting to compare it in profile with that of the central figure in the Dance of the Hours in the "Primavera" of Botticelli. The features are identical, and there can be no doubt but that bust and painting represent the same lady, evidently a personage of importance, since in the allegorical picture it is at her that the Love directs his flame-tipped arrow. The bust formed part of the Medici collection, from which may be assumed that the lady was, if not a member of the family, at least closely connected with it. The primroses—evidently symbolic—which she holds, may some day lead to

\* Gabriele d'Annunzio, "La Gioconda."

an identification.\* The resemblance to the figure in the "Primavera" helps to date the work with approximate accuracy. The painting, executed to commemorate the Joust of Giuliano, dates from about 1475, and as the lady appears of the same age in both, the bust is probably of the same date.

Closely related to this bust—Verrocchio's masterpiece in marble sculpture—is another in the possession of M. Gustave Dreyfus, Paris, representing a young girl of about sixteen (Plate XXIV). It has been badly broken, the head severed from the neck, and the nose and chin much damaged, but in spite of these injuries the face retains its delicate beauty. Verrocchio has again portrayed a subtle and evanescent expression, even less definable than that of the Bargello bust, an expression of shy interrogation, charmingly appropriate to the youth of the lady. The details of the dress are elaborate and characteristic. The acanthus leaves of the clasp which fastens her tunic are cut with the sharpness of those on the Tomb of S. Lorenzo. The embroidery of the sleeves is carefully wrought with a goldsmith's love of fine detail, and the hair is so realistically carved that the marks of the comb are visible where it is drawn off the forehead.

Again there is a difficulty of identification of the sitter. It bears usually the name of Medea Colleoni, the daughter of the General immortalised by Verrocchio in his Venice statue, on account of the pattern embroidered on the sleeve, which resembles the *stemma* of the family. Neither

\* Dr. Bode, finding a likeness to the Ghirlandesque medal inscribed Giovanna degli Albizzi, wife of Lorenzo Tornabuoni, supposes the bust to be a portrait of her, but the features on the medal appear to me to differ considerably.



"MEDEA COLLEONI." COLLECTION OF M. GUSTAVE DREYFUS, PARIS  
(By kind permission of M. G. Dreyfus)

*Face p. 110*







BUST OF LADY. COLLECTION OF M. EDMOND FOULC, PARIS  
(By kind permission of Dr. Bode)

the features nor the style of dressing the hair, however, have the least likeness to the portrait statue of Medea by Amadei on her tomb in Bergamo, which, in spite of its mediocrity, has the individuality of a faithful portrait. Should Verrocchio's bust really represent her, it must have been executed before 1470, which was the year of her death.

Lastly in this group of female portraits we have the beautiful terra-cotta bust of a lady in the collection of M. Edmond Foulc, Paris, which was first decisively attributed to Verrocchio by Dr. Bode (Plate XXV). The work is so admirable, and has his characteristics of construction and of modelling to so marked a degree, as to leave little doubt of its authenticity. The face with its broad cheeks, wide-winged nostrils, firm mouth and square jaw, is very characteristic, as also is the combination in the expression of delicacy and strength. The figure is cut off just below the girdle in the same manner as the Bargello bust, a peculiarity rarely met with in portrait sculpture. The details of the dress, though slight, are carefully finished, the lacings of the bodice, the broad belt buckled at the side and the many-pleated robe beneath being indicated with admirable delicacy. The bust, too little known and appreciated, is one of the most attractive portraits of the fifteenth century.

That Verrocchio had acquired fame as a painter as well as a sculptor of female portraits we have various records to prove. One of the most interesting entries in Tommaso's Inventory is of a wooden panel painted with the head of Lucrezia dei Donati, the mistress of Lorenzo dei Medici. "Per uno quadro dj legname drentovj la figura della testa della Luchrezia de Donatj," a commission from

Lorenzo which testifies to his appreciation of his powers as a portrait-painter. Unfortunately the panel seems to be no longer in existence, though, were it not for the prominence given to the symbolic juniper, one might be tempted to identify it with the Lichtenstein portrait.

Of other female portraits by Verrocchio we have the record of Vasari, who speaks of one in the possession of Don Vincenzo Borghini, which was apparently executed in water-colour—"a head of a lady as delicately finished as possible, painted on paper," and of several drawings in his own collection—"heads of ladies of noble mien and with elaborately dressed hair, which by reason of their beauty were imitated by Leonardo." \* The magnificent drawing in the Malcolm collection, in the British Museum, representing the life-sized head of a lady with elaborately arranged hair may possibly be one of these drawings from Vasari's collection † (Plate XXVI). It is in black chalk on white paper, so much blurred by damp about the face that this part has lost much of the original beauty of line, and at first glance seems as though washed with sepia. These damaged parts have been coarsely retouched with black chalk. A portion of the drawing is, however, in excellent preservation, including the upper part of the head with the plaits and waves of hair, and these show better than any other of his drawings the energy and decision of Verrocchio's touch and the vivacity of line hardly inferior to that of Leonardo himself. The sweep of the chalk in the curves of the curls and plaits, the life and movement in the loose wind-blown tresses, the sharp, firm

\* Vasari, iii. 364.

† The drawing was formerly attributed to the North Italian School, and was first given to Verrocchio by Morelli.



HEAD OF LADY. MALCOLM COLLECTION, BRITISH MUSEUM  
(Private photograph)







STUDY FOR HEAD OF LADY. MALCOLM COLLECTION, BRITISH MUSEUM  
(Private photograph)

*Face p. 113*

touches that give accent to the shadows, show to perfection Verrocchio's powers of draughtsmanship. The drawing would seem to be the study for some larger picture, the inclination of the head and the downcast eyes, which seem gazing at some object below, suggesting a complete figure. It might well be a study for some such romantic allegory as those represented on the standards of Lorenzo and Giuliano. The depression of the head and the slightly melancholy expression suggest something of the influence of Botticelli. The construction of the face is highly characteristic of Verrocchio. Each separate feature is exactly repeated in the Madonna of the Uffizi Annunciation, in the Angels of the Baptism, and in the Uffizi drawings of the Venus and the Angel.

On the other side of the sheet is a life-sized study of the same head bent at the same angle, and apparently a first sketch from life, from which the other is elaborated and idealised. This study, also in black chalk, is in good preservation, and the rapid and resolute strokes are good examples of the artist's original work. (Plate XXVII.)

✓ The elaborate and beautiful treatment of the hair in the finished drawing bears, as Vasari suggests, much resemblance to the *bell' acconciatura* of Leonardo, but whether, as he states, it was Leonardo who imitated Verrocchio, or the reverse, is uncertain. Leonardo, who delighted in the waves and curls of beautiful hair, and gave to each line a vivid independent life, may well have inspired Verrocchio with his love for interwoven plaits and wind-blown tresses in lieu of the clustered curls which seem to have been his personal choice. Or it may have been the actual mode of dressing the hair which inspired both artists by its beauty after the tight curls and shaven

foreheads of the earlier fashion. As Dr. Mackowsky points out, the date of the drawing may be approximately determined by this peculiar arrangement of the hair, the elaboration of which was a reaction on the former mode. Until the middle of the century the Italian ladies suppressed the hair as much as possible; they shaved the forehead and eyebrows and drew such hair as they allowed to remain tightly away from the face, covering it with folded veils, as we see it in the busts of Desiderio and Laurana and in the paintings of Piero dei Franceschi and his school. Later the fashion changed, and its transition state we see in Ghirlandaio's paintings and in the Lichtenstein portrait and Bargello bust by Verrocchio, where the hair, smooth on the head, was tightly curled and clustered in grape-like bunches on the cheeks. After 1470 the dressing became more and more elaborate. Half-plaited, half-fluttering loose, often, as in this drawing of Verrocchio, fastened on the forehead with a jewel, wreathed in snake-like coils round the head, interwoven with pearls and ribbons, the hair, a few years earlier completely ignored, then played the most important part in the lady's face. The fashion for elaborate *coiffure* was at its height towards 1480, at about which date the drawing may be placed.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE MADONNA

PERHAPS, owing to his almost constant employment by the Medici, or possibly to his realistic and secular treatment of sacred themes, Verrocchio seems to have been but little employed by the Church. If we except the early goldsmith's work mentioned by Vasari, only twice did he receive commissions from the Opera del Duomo, and one of these was for the merely engineering work of the *Palla*. Of the rest of his existing sculptures and painting only four besides were commissioned by ecclesiastics—the Baptism, the Annunciation, the Pistoja Altarpiece, and the Forteguerri Tomb. These two last orders were strangely neglected by him, and for both he was in dispute with the commissioners, that of the Forteguerri Tomb being conceded to him only through the intervention of Lorenzo dei Medici. No master of the fifteenth century, with the exception of Antonio Pollaiuolo, executed fewer Altarpieces, and with the subject most in favour with the earlier generation—the Madonna—he seems to have had little sympathy. Of all those attributed to him in sculpture and painting—and they are many—but *one is authentic*, the terra-cotta relief formerly in the Gallery of S. Maria Nuova, now in the Bargello. Vasari mentions two others as being by him, but one of these, the

Tondo over the Sarcophagus of Leonardo Bruni in S. Croce, is not even of his school; while the other, a marble relief, formerly in the possession of the Medici, may in all probability be identified with a mediocre school-work now in the Bargello. The survival of but one genuine sculpture of this most popular subject argues that even if he executed others it was but rarely. It is the most convincing proof of his immense influence in Florence that, in spite of his neglect of the theme, the type of Madonna created by him should yet have superseded those hitherto in vogue, and set the fashion for a new conception of the character.

This one example that we possess, the Madonna of S. Maria Nuova (Plate XXVIII), is treated in a spirit essentially secular. The Virgin, with her elaborate *coiffure*, contemporary clothes and cheerful smile, has nothing of the hieratic solemnity of the Donatellesque Madonna, nor the statuesque coldness of that of Luca della Robbia, nor the simplicity of that of Andrea. Luca and the Donatellesques represented her in the divine aspect, Andrea and his school on the human side, but both interpreted the character from the Church's standpoint. The Virgin of Verrocchio is treated neither historically nor symbolically. She is merely a noble Florentine lady of contemporary date, and it is equally impossible to regard her as a cultus-image or as the personage of biblical narrative. The child is treated in a manner equally secular. The charming little face is as gay and careless as that of the Amorino of the Palazzo Vecchio fountain. The conventional blessing gesture of the hand is half-hearted. There is no halo nor any suggestion of Christian emblem, and were it not for the modern addition of the Dove, the relief might be a portrait of a mother and child of Verrocchio's own epoch and country.



*Alinari, Florence*

MADONNA AND CHILD. BARGELLO, FLORENCE

*Face p. 116*



The history of the work is unknown, but it is probable that, like most of the collection of the Gallery of S. Maria Nuova of this date, it was commissioned by Tommaso Portinari for the decoration of the chapel of the Hospital. While in the Gallery it hung, as a thing of little value, at the top of the staircase outside the hall. The relief is here reproduced in its original form, the oval top with the dove and blue painted background being a late addition in stucco, which robs the composition of much of its beauty. The right arm of the child where it touches the arm of the Virgin has been restored, but otherwise the work is in good preservation.

The date of execution is evidently not early, for the elaborate draperies belong to Verrocchio's later manner. The freedom of gesture and facility of execution point also to a late date, probably somewhere between 1475 and 1480. The modelling of the child's body and limbs, though slightly heavier than that of the Putto with the Dolphin, is of equal beauty and truth, and the hand of the Virgin is unmatched in contemporary art, save by Verrocchio himself in the portrait bust of the Bargello, to which in construction it bears the closest resemblance. Both figures have an aristocratic refinement and distinction which more than compensates for the absence of hieratic solemnity.

The influence of the work on Florentine art was, judging by the numerous contemporary imitations, immediate and decisive. This Madonna, with her elaborate headdress and cheerful smile, this realistically-treated *débonnaire* child, set the fashion for a new type, which was followed more or less in all subsequent painting and sculpture. Unfortunately many of these imitations are attributed to Verrocchio himself.

Among the most important of such imitations claimed by several of the critics as his work, is a group of panels which, while copying superficially certain of his characteristics, differ in essentials completely from his scientific work. The group comprises two Madonnas in the Berlin Gallery (Nos. 104A and 108), and the Madonna and Angels, No. 296 of the National Gallery. With this latter is connected "The Journey of Tobias," also in the National Gallery, No. 781. In all these paintings the influence of Verrocchio is predominant, but it is combined with that of Piero Pollaiuolo as well as of other painters and sculptors, and with a personal conception of form which, though in itself not admirable, gives the paintings a certain individuality. The imitation of Verrocchio in the three Madonnas consists in the type of face and the elaborate arrangement of the Virgin's *coiffure*, in certain forms in the construction of the child's body, and in the general conception of the theme. The influence of Piero Pollaiuolo is perceptible in the structure of the Virgin's body and the draperies, and the personal touch of the artist is most striking in the curious and mannered formation of the hands. Were no other evidence than the peculiarities of these hands adduced to refute the attribution of the paintings to Verrocchio, it would be sufficient, for no difference could be greater than his scientifically constructed, beautiful, and expressive hands and those of the paintings, with their exaggerated breadth of palm, ill-shaped nails, and peculiar curled thumb. The latter mannerism is that of an artist whose scientific studies have been slight, and who (as, indeed, the anatomy of the faces and structure of the body also proves) had but a superficial knowledge of the human skeleton.

The hand of Verrocchio, of whose beauty so much has





*Hanjsaengl, Munich*

MADONNA AND CHILD. PAINTER UNKNOWN. BERLIN MUSEUM

*Face p. 119*

already been said, is absolutely true to nature. He has selected the most perfect type and imitated it with the scientific accuracy he shows in all his anatomy, free from school conventions or mannerisms of any sort. But for its expressiveness it might be cast from life. Let the reader compare the hands of the Madonna here reproduced (Plate XXIX), No. 104A of the Berlin Gallery (in which, however, the curve of the thumb is less exaggerated than in the others), with those of the terra-cotta Madonna, of the marble bust, of the David, the Group of Or S. Michele, the Colleoni, or indeed, of any of Verrocchio's authentic work, and judge whether it be possible that he could have been guilty of a mannerism so false to nature.

There are other reasons equally strong against the acceptance of any of these paintings as his work. In the Berlin picture the bad construction of the Virgin's body, with its long prominent stomach and clumsy attitude, the mechanical pleats of the skirt draperies, the poor modelling of the child's arms and hands, are opposed to all his forms. Let the reader recall the supple and graceful construction of his female figures, the exquisite modelling of the limbs of his *putti*, the invariable beauty and elegance of his draperies. Where do we find in his authentic work hair treated in the fussy, niggled manner of this child's curls, or landscape so tame, with its squat trees imitated from Lorenzo di Credi?

By the same artist is the Madonna No. 108 of the Berlin Gallery, also ascribed, and with as little reason, to Verrocchio. The Virgin stands holding the Child before her on a parapet, in a red robe and blue mantle decked with jewels, wearing the elaborate headdress of Verrocchio over her blonde hair. Behind is a landscape with the little bush-

like trees of Credi. It is a more pleasing picture than that just considered on account of a certain earnestness and charm in the faces, but the mannerism of the curved thumb and the rolls of fat in the child's body are exaggerated to a degree almost grotesque. The figure of the Virgin is constructed like the foregoing in the manner of Piero Pollaiuolo, with narrow sloping shoulders and short waist, and the folds of the draperies are stiffly and unintelligently arranged and indicate no solid form beneath.\*

The Madonna and Angel, No. 296 of the National Gallery, seems to be a more mature work by the same artist. Here the Virgin is seated beneath a curtain, gazing at the Child on her knee, with the Baptist on one side and an Angel holding a lily on the other. The length of her body is abnormal and the attitude of the Child is clumsy and constrained. The thumbs are less curled than in the foregoing paintings, but the mannerism is extended to the great toes of the Child, which curve completely round. Yet with all its faults there is much beauty and dignity in the picture, especially in the faces of the Virgin and of the young Baptist.

The influence of Verrocchio here, as in the foregoing paintings, predominates, but it is in externals only—in the type of face, the arrangement of the veil and certain superficial resemblances of feature. The eclectic character of the work is evidenced by the fact that it has at various times been attributed to such different masters as Domenico

\* Of this painting Crowe and Cavalcaselle wrote: "To us it seems a work executed most conscientiously in the bottega of Verrocchio by an able young painter who may have aided himself with some design or plastic work of the master." (*Storia dell'arte Pittura*, vi. 194.) It was at one time supposed to be a youthful work of Leonardo.

Ghirlandaio (under whose name it was acquired by the Gallery), Piero dei Franceschi, Antonio Pollaiuolo, Lorenzo di Credi,\* and Verrocchio. To these influences may be added that of Fra Filippo.

In the same Gallery is the last painting of this group—"The Journey of Tobias," No. 781. I believe no one has yet ventured to attribute this *naïve* work to Verrocchio, yet it is undoubtedly by the same hand as the above-mentioned Madonnas, and cannot reasonably be separated from them, having everything in common in form and technique. It is, in fact, more externally Verrocchiesque than either, the head of the Archangel being obviously imitated from the Angel of the Baptism. In this painting the curved thumbs have reached their highest pitch of exaggeration.†

In default of any definite knowledge of the artist, the paintings can be attributed only to an eclectic Florentine of the fifteenth century, on whom the influence of Piero Pollaiuolo, of Verrocchio, and of Lorenzo di Credi is of almost equal degree.

So much for the painted Madonnas attributed to Verrocchio; the sculptured work is even more abundant; so abundant that a separate mention of more than one or two would be wearisome and useless. It is enough to say that not one of them shows either the energy, the distinction, or the technical excellence of Verrocchio's work. Vasari, as has been already said, repeating the statement of the

\* Cavalcaselle suggested that it might be a youthful work of Lorenzo di Credi. (Storia della Pittura, vi. 198.)

† The picture has been recently attributed to Francesco Botticini. If, however, Botticini be the painter of the exceedingly fine "Journey of Tobias," No. 84 of the Accademia, Florence, and the Santa Monica of the Church of S. Spirito, the attribution is as inadmissible as that to Verrocchio. Both these paintings are works of the first order.

Anonimo Magliabecchiano, attributes to him the relief of the Madonna set in the *tondo* above the Sarcophagus of Bernardo Rossellino's Tomb of Leonardo Bruni in S. Croce, which shows nothing even of his manner, and is indeed now claimed by no one as his work. He mentions also another relief of a Madonna as being by Verrocchio—"a Nostra Donna in marble in mezzo-rilievo, half-length, with the Child in her arms; the which was formerly in Casa Medici, and is now in the Chamber of the Duchess of Florence over a door, a most beautiful work."\* This has been identified, probably correctly, with the marble relief now in the Bargello, No. 180 (Plate XXX), which is officially labelled without interrogation as by Andrea Verrocchio. In workmanship it is superior to any of the rest attributed to him, and is closer to his style, but the differences of treatment are too great to allow of its acceptance as more than school-work. Putting aside the quality of the modelling of the nude parts, which is vastly inferior to that of Verrocchio, the soft curving lines of the draperies are directly opposed to his manner, which, even when the folds are most redundant, is sharp and has a tendency to angularity. The square flat hand and fingers of the Virgin have in construction nothing in common with the hand of Verrocchio. The child, in which the protruding hip and rolls of fat of Verrocchio's type are grossly exaggerated, has a vulgarity of expression in striking contrast to his graceful and gracious *putti*. In the treatment of the hair and general character it is imitated rather from the Christ-Child of Desiderio over the Tabernacle of the Sacrament in S. Lorenzo, than from Verrocchio. The dress of the Virgin is fastened with the winged cherub, the favourite ornament of the Donatellesque

\* Vasari, iii. 361.



*Alinari, Florence*

MADONNA AND CHILD. BY FRANCESCO DI SIMONE (?)  
BARGELLO, FLORENCE

*Face p. 122*



School, never used by Verrocchio, and there is a suavity in the spirit and treatment which points to an artist influenced as much in essentials by Desiderio and Rossellino as he is superficially by Verrocchio. The relief is probably the work of Francesco di Simone at his best, the blending of styles being highly characteristic of this artist, of whom much must be said later in studying the so-called Torna-buoni Relief and the "Verrocchio Sketch-Book."

Another work of greater artistic merit, probably by the same hand, is in the possession of Mr. George Diblee, at present on loan in the Fortnum Collection, Oxford. It is in uncoloured *gesso*, and represents the Madonna holding the upright Child on her knee. It would be difficult to say which influence most predominates—that of Verrocchio, of Desiderio, or of Fra Filippo, and in this case the combination is more successful and attractive than in any other work of this group.

The marble relief attributed to the School of Verrocchio, representing the Madonna and Child with an attendant Angel, in the collection of Mr. Quincy Shaw, Boston, seems to be also by this imitative artist. Here the style is much closer to Fra Filippo than to Verrocchio, with whom it has little in common except the arrangement of the Virgin's head-dress. The composition is evidently borrowed from the painting of Fra Filippo, the Madonna and Angels of the Uffizi. The same winged cherub as in the Bargello relief is used to fasten the dress, a motive repeatedly introduced by Francesco di Simone.

The terra-cotta relief of the Madonna, No. 7576 of the Victoria and Albert Museum, bought at the Gigli-Campana sale, must also be attributed to the same artist. It is a poor production and shows also strong traces of the style

of Fra Filippo, though the Child is entirely imitated from Verrocchio's type. The robe of this Madonna is likewise fastened with the six-winged cherub.

It is unnecessary to draw attention to more of the imitations of the Madonna of Verrocchio executed in marble, in terra-cotta, in painted *gesso*, in the Robbia glazed ware, and on panel. Those mentioned above are the only works whose attribution to Verrocchio can be seriously considered. The immense number of these superficial imitations by artists who had nothing in common with, and were incapable of reproducing the spirit of his work, points to the popularity with the Florentines of the type created by him. Verrocchio's cheerful Madonna, with her *bell' acconciatura* and her *mondaine* air, his *putto* with its realistic plumpness and light-hearted gaiety, had become the fashion in Florentine art, which was fast approaching the period of complete secularism.





*Alinari, Florence*

THE FORTEGUERRI TOMB. DUOMO, PISTOIA

*Face p. 125*

## CHAPTER X

### THE FORTEGUERRI TOMB

TAKING the work of Verrocchio in approximately chronological order, we have now to consider the Monument to Niccolò Forteguerri in the Cathedral of Pistoia, the model for which was prepared by him in 1474. This model is no longer in existence, though studies for part of the detail still survive. These studies—figures of two flying angels, now in the Louvre—represent his only personal work in the Monument, for the marble tomb in the Cathedral shows no trace of his execution, and in its present state but little of his design.

The history of the Monument is exceedingly complicated, on account of the inexplicable lapse of time from commencement to finish (no less than 275 years \*), and of the number of hands employed in its construction, for which reason in general effect it has lost all resemblance to the manner of Verrocchio, and even to that of his epoch.

Niccolò Forteguerri, of a noble Pistoiese family, Papal Legate, Cardinal of Teano and aspirant to the Papacy, was beloved by his fellow townsmen on account of the

\* Commissioned 1478, four years after the model was ordered. Finished 1753.

benefits he had conferred on the city, among others the foundation of the Liceo Forteguerri, a college for poor students which still exists. He died at Viterbo at the age of fifty-four, and was buried in the Church of S. Cecilia, Rome, where his Monument—one of Mino da Fiesole's finest sculptures—still remains. The Pistoiese, anxious also to honour their benefactor, decided to erect a monument to his memory in his native city, and in January 1474 the Operai di S. Jacopo (the Duomo) gave the commission to certain sculptors of Pistoia and Florence, among them Verrocchio, to prepare models for competition. Five such models were presented, and that of Verrocchio was chosen. Difficulties arose, however, as to price. The Operai were authorised by the Council to spend only 300 ducats on the Monument, and Verrocchio demanded 350. They appealed to the Superior Council for the additional sum, which was granted them without difficulty, with the authority to give the commission to whomsoever they pleased provided that a beautiful and worthy work were produced. On receipt of this authority the Operai, either annoyed at the demands of Verrocchio or for some other reason, determined to exclude him from the competition, and to give the work to Piero Pollaiuolo, who was then employed in the city. He was desired to prepare a fresh model, which was considered by the Operai and the family of the dead Cardinal as "more beautiful and artistically worthy" than that of Verrocchio, and they besought the Council that some indemnity might be made to the latter, and that the commission might be given to Piero. But the Council meantime had, independently of the Ecclesiastics, ratified the commission to Verrocchio for the price he demanded, 350 ducats, and the disputes and difficulties

rose to such a pitch that the intervention of Lorenzo dei Medici was desired to settle the matter (March 11, 1478, N.S.). The rival models, those of Verrocchio and of Piero Pollaiuolo, were sent to him in Florence, and his judgment as to their respective merits demanded. Lorenzo's answer is, unfortunately, not forthcoming, but that his judgment was in favour of Verrocchio is known to us by another letter from the Operai, written within six days of the first (March 17, 1478). In this they express themselves "aware of their own inexperience in such matters," and ready to bow to his decision. The commission for the Monument was, upon receipt of Lorenzo's letter, definitively given to Verrocchio.

Since the most probable explanation of Verrocchio's neglect of the commission and the absence of any personal work in the marble tomb is to be found in his resentment at the inimical attitude towards him of the Operai, their letter to Lorenzo, lengthy though it be, must be quoted :

*Magnifice Vir et benefactor, &c. . . .*

For necessary things we have to trouble your Magnificence, and for this reason ; that after the death of Monsignor di Thyano of blessed memory, our dearly loved compatriot, as a memorial of his most reverend Lordship, and on account of benefits received from him by this City, it seemed good to this Community to make a public demonstration, and at our advice it was decided that a sum of 1100 Lire should be spent on a monument to his memory ; and that it befitted us Citizens that we should cause models to be made, and that these when finished should be presented to the Council, and that which the Council chose should be accepted.. Wherefore five models were presented to the Council, among the which was one by Andrea del Varrocchio, which pleased more

than the others : and the Council commissioned us to treat of the price with the said Andrea. This we did, and he asked of us 350 ducats, and we, having heard his terms, dismissed him and settled nothing with him, since we were not commissioned to spend more than 1100 lire. And then, since we desired that the said work should have effect, we had recourse to the Council, saying that a larger sum of money was needed for this work than 1100 lire, if a worthy thing was desired. The Council, on hearing the facts, deliberated anew, and gave us authority to spend whatever sum of money we thought fit for the said work, so long as it was beautiful, and allowed us to commission it to the said Andrea or to any other that we chose. Wherefore we, understanding that Piero del Pollaiuolo was here, went to him, and begged him to make a model for such a work, the which he promised to do, and on this account we postponed the commission for the said work. Now it has followed that our Commissioners, in order to give effect to the said work, have given the commission to the said Andrea for the said price and fashion ; and we, as obedient children in this and in everything that they may do and decide, shall be always content and obedient ; and we have written to them to that effect. Now Piero del Pollaiuolo has made the model for which he was commissioned by us, the which seems to us more beautiful and more artistically worthy, and is more pleasing and satisfactory to Messer Piero, brother to the said Monsignore, and to all his family, and also to us and to all the inhabitants of our city who have seen it, than was that of Andrea or any other ; and on this account we have begged the said Commissioners that they should be pleased to make some compensation to the said Andrea, and to take the work of the said Piero, which would give us great satisfaction and pleasure. Wherefore now to you as our protector we send the said models, because in such things as in every other, you have the most complete intelligence, and we are certain that you desire the honour

of the said Monsignore and of his family and of all our city, &c. &c.

From Pistoja, 11 March 1477.

Your servants the Operai of S. Jacopo, &c., to the Magnifico Lorenzo dei Medici our benefactor, &c.\*

It is now almost universally accepted that not a touch of Verrocchio's own chisel can be found in the marble Monument, and various explanations have been suggested to account for this. It has been supposed that he was absent in Venice preparing his model of the Colleoni horse; yet there was a lapse of two years between the Pistoia commission and that of the Venetian Signoria (1479). That he was occupied on other and more important work in Florence—the Relief for the Silver Altar of S. Giovanni and the Group of Or S. Michele—is hardly sufficient reason to account for his total neglect of the Pistoia Monument and the abandonment of a work to his assistants for the details of which he had with his own hand carefully prepared studies. We know, besides, that by the summer of 1483 (thus before his final departure to Venice) a great part of the marble sculpture was already completed, for in the account-books of the Commune of Pistoia we read a record of his demand in July of that year for fifty broad florins in part payment of the work, which, it is expressly stated, was then “in great part brought to completion.” † Some more cogent reason must

\* See Doc. xii. p. .

† “Andrea del Verrocchio *havendo in buonaparte tracto a fine la sepultura*, &c., adomanda al presente fl. cinquanta larghi per parte di quello ha avere.” (Provvisioni dell' Arch. Comm. di Pistoja, Lib. 68 a c. 7.) And again, under the marginal indication, “Pro seppulchro Card.lis,” is written, “Cum Andreas del verrochio lapidarius et

have caused his neglect, and this may possibly be found in the hostility shown to him by the ecclesiastics. It is more than probable that Lorenzo dei Medici consulted Verrocchio on his receipt of the letter and models sent by the Operai, and that he resented their unwillingness to confirm the commission given to him by the Council. Their sharp practice in dealing with him must have annoyed him profoundly, but above all he must have resented their preference of the work of Piero Pollaiuolo. Of what use, he must have felt, to waste his labour on men so ignorant that they judged the work of an artist so greatly his inferior as "more beautiful and artistically worthy" than his own. If they could understand and appreciate so little, the sculpture of his assistants was good enough for them; Lorenzo di Credi was at least the equal of Piero Pollaiuolo. For such justifiable reasons the sculpture may have been abandoned to his assistants, and even by them it seems to have remained neglected, for at Verrocchio's death eleven years later, it was still unfinished. As will presently be seen, the same neglect and procrastination was repeated in the execution of the Altarpiece of the Madonna and Saints, commissioned by the same Operai di S. Jacopo.

To continue the history of the Monument. The upper part alone follows the design of Verrocchio—Christ in the *Mandorla*, the four supporting Angels, and the three Virtues below, and even these were not finished in his

sculptor, qui facit sepulturam R<sup>me</sup> D. Card.lis Thianensis de forteguerris *eam quasi conduxerit* petit modo pro parte eius mexedis florenos quinquaginta larghos." (Delib. 65, a c. 43.) Quoted by Chiappelli e Chiti. "Andrea del Verrocchio in Pistoja," *Bullettino Storico Pistoiese*, Anno ii. Fasc. i. p. 41.

*bottega*, for the central figure of the Charity was lacking. From the statement in the account-book above quoted, that the work was nearly completed in 1483, it would seem as though after that date, and the receipt of part of the payment, the Monument was touched no further. After the death of Verrocchio in 1488 it was removed to Pistoia in its unfinished state, in which it was allowed to remain for twenty-three years. At the end of that time the authorities deliberated anew as to the completion of the work, which had already fallen into partial disrepair, and on June 17, 1511, the commission was given to Lorenzo di Lodovico Buono, otherwise called Lorenzo Lotti, brother-in-law of Giulio Romano, and assistant of Raffaele, a young man twenty-one years of age, son of the noted bronze-founder who had aided Michelangelo with his statue of Julius II. in Bologna. The document of commission is preserved and exactly specifies those parts that were lacking to the Tomb, and which were to be added by Lorenzo. These were the figure of the Cardinal himself, the Charity, two *putti* at the foot supporting the coat-of-arms, and two angels above upon the cornice holding *candelabra*, all the which figures (and this is important as proving that they existed in Verrocchio's original plan) he was desired to copy "in such mode and form as is designed in a certain model." To quote the words of the document, Lorenzo undertook to

repair, set in order, put together and complete the sepulchre, with good and fine white marble of Carrara, in such mode and form as is designed in a certain model. . . . In the which model are, and must be added to the foot of the said sepulchre, two *bambini* of marble, with the arms of the said Cardinal, and two other little angels with two *candelabra*

above on the cornice of marble . . and to make the figure of the said Cardinal, and the Charity which is above the said Cardinal, to be executed with a beauty and perfection corresponding to the other figures at present existing on the said sepulchre.\*

The Monument was, however, destined to remain unfinished. Lorenzo executed, according to his mediocre ability, the Charity and a kneeling figure of the Cardinal, which seems never to have been placed on the Tomb, and is now in the Liceo Forteguerri. That was all. The *putti* supporting the inscription below the sarcophagus are not, as will presently be seen, by him, but belong to the original work executed in Verrocchio's *bottega*, nor are the two seated on the volutes, which are of the eighteenth century. Neither did he carry out the commission for the little angels, which were to have been above the cornice, unless they were removed during the completion of the Monument.

In an unfinished state the Tomb remained for no less than 240 years, until, that is to say, the middle of the eighteenth century. In 1753, Gaetano Masoni, a sculptor of Settignano, completed the Monument, and set on it that *cachet* of vulgarity which at first glance makes it seem incredible that any part of it belongs to the Quattrocento. To him are due the bust of the Cardinal, the Sarcophagus with the two huge children holding reversed torches, the surmounting *stemma*, and the surrounding *baroque* frame-

\* See Doc. xii. p. 3, published by Beani, "Notizie Storiche su Niccolò Forteguerri," p. 124. Vasari, in his Life of Lorenzo Lotti, states: "Fini Lorenzetto nella sua giovinezza la sepoltura del Cardinale Forteguerri posta in San Jacopo di Pistoia, e stata già cominciata da Andrea del Verrocchio; e fra l'altre cose vi è di mano di Lorenzetto una Carità che non è se non ragionevole." Vasari, iv. 578.





SUPPOSED STUDY FOR THE FORTEGUERRI TOMB. VICTORIA  
AND ALBERT MUSEUM, SOUTH KENSINGTON

work. Documents recording this commission are likewise preserved in the Archives of the Cathedral.

So much for the history of the Monument. Although not one fraction of the sculpture is by the hand of Verrocchio, it is worth while to examine such parts as belong to his design and were executed in his *bottega*, that is to say, the figures of Christ, of the four Angels supporting the *Mandorla*, and of the Faith and Hope. To these must be added, although there is no documentary evidence in support, the relief with the inscription supported by the Donatellesque *putti*. But before examining the marble itself a few words must be said as to the authenticity of a clay model in the Victoria and Albert Museum, South Kensington, No. 7599, which is claimed by several critics to be Verrocchio's own work, and officially declared to be the original model prepared by him in 1474 at the commission of the Operai di S. Jacopo.

It is now no longer open to doubt that the Gigli-Campana Collection, from which this model, among many others in the Museum, was bought, contained a large number of modern forgeries—forgeries adroitly fashioned, with such slight variations on the original as should impress the collector with the certainty of authenticity—forgeries such as may be seen by the score in every antiquity shop in Florence in our own day. The clever imitators would have shown more judgment, however, had they confined themselves to copying the work of minor artists, for as a rule the execution is of the roughest and poorest, such fluency as it possesses being that of the mechanic accustomed to produce a hundred such models. This is especially the case in the so-called Study for the Forteguerri Tomb. Besides the unmistakable impress of

*modernness*, which is a quality hardly susceptible of demonstration, the technical execution is unworthy of any hand but that of an artisan. The very variations by which the fraud was to gain credence betray it. Such an addition, for instance, as the huge winged garland below the Sarcophagus, which is out of keeping with the epoch, and has evidently been suggested to the designer by the volutes on the actual tomb. It is almost incredible that this ill-sketched, ill-modelled, and trivial work should, even by those who attribute the sculpture itself to Verrocchio, be accepted as by him. The relief would be unworthy of notice were not the attention forced upon it by the attribution. There is no doubt whatever but that it is a modern forgery executed by some ignorant mechanic with fraudulent intention.\*

Moreover, such careless rough work, even were the modelling passable, is not at all in the manner in which the Quattrocento artist prepared his model for competition. They were well paid for these models, independently of the ultimate commission, and as the few surviving genuine specimens show, they executed them with as much care and delicacy as they bestowed upon the finished sculpture. The production of such hasty sketches, claiming to be the original models for competition, is based on a mistaken idea of their purpose, which was, not only to give the general effect of the proposed monument, but to testify to the artist's ability in all the details of workmanship.

But if the model of South Kensington must be emphatically rejected as an authentic work of Verrocchio, we are fortunate in possessing two genuine and most beautiful studies for the Tomb. Among the works of art which

\* It was bought for £80 at the Gigli-Campana Sale in 1860.





STUDY OF ANGEL FOR FORTEGUERRI TOMB. THIERS COLLECTION,  
LOUVRE

(Private photograph)

*Face p. 135*

came to the Louvre from the Collection Thiers are two terra-cotta angels with voluminous fluttering draperies and large spread wings, so fine in feeling, so exquisitely modelled, that, like most of the noblest work of Verrocchio, it has been suggested they can be by no other hand than that of Leonardo.\* (Plate XXXIII.)

Judging by the inclination of the figures, they are studies for the two angels which support the upper part of the *Mandorla*, but in the marble there are noticeable variations, especially in that on the left. The work is rapid, and at the same time careful, the action and expression are full of vivacity, and the faces are of the utmost refinement and beauty. The modelling of these and of the hands and feet is worthy of Verrocchio's best years, the plumage of the wings is admirably suggested, the well-arranged draperies, though elaborate, indicate perfectly the form beneath. In fine, these models (for whose attribution to Verrocchio we have, I believe, to thank Dr. Bode) are among the most poetic and technically perfect of his works. The clustered treatment of the hair, the voluminous draperies, the freedom of movement, and facility of execution correspond with all his work of this late date.

It is certainly a mystery that the artist who took the pains to model with his own hand figures so exquisite as are these angels should have allowed the alterations which are visible in the finished sculpture. The only explanation that can be offered is that the words used in the document of 1483, "in great part completed,"

\* "S'ils n'étaient pas de Verrocchio, ces anges ne pourraient être que de la main divine de Leonardo lui-même." Louis Gonse, cited by Müntz, *Revue des deux Mondes*, 1887.

referred to the general effect of the Monument, and that the detailed work of these figures and the variations upon Verrocchio's original models are due, not to his own assistants, but to Lorenzo Lotti. The figures of the Virtues and of the lower Angel to the right are much superior to the rest; that of the Faith, indeed, has something of Verrocchio's own nobility of bearing and feature, and must have been faithfully copied from his own design. These were probably entirely completed, the other figures being only roughly blocked out, giving, however, the form and general effect, so that to the inexperienced eye of the ecclesiastic deputed to report on its state the work would have appeared nearly completed. In this case Lotti, possessing only Verrocchio's original model which belonged to the Operai, and not the detailed studies, would have finished the blocked-out figures in his own way.

For the sculptor of the original work of the Monument, executed during the lifetime and in the *bottega* of Verrocchio, we must probably look to Lorenzo di Credi, a theory justified by the existence of a drawing by him which is certainly intended for the tomb. This silver-point sketch, preserved in the British Museum, was attributed by Morelli to Verrocchio himself, but has of late been unanimously accepted as by Credi. It is an elaborate study on pink paper heightened with white, for the upper angel on the right, and it confirms the suggestion made above that this figure was only roughly blocked out when the Monument left Verrocchio's *bottega*, for in the finished marble the general lines of body and limb and the more deeply cut folds of the draperies are identical with those in the drawing, while the details and superficial folds

vary considerably. Lorenzo di Credi is not known to us as a sculptor by any documentarily authenticated work, but we know that he assisted his master in that art as well as in painting, and it is probable from Verrocchio's own words that he had some amount of technical ability.\* And it is not technical ability which is lacking in these sculptures, for the work is facile and the hand has responded readily enough to the brain. The fault lies in a temperamental defect, the mediocrity of conception and commonplace dulness amounting to vulgarity, inseparable from all his productions. We shall find the round characterless faces of these figures, the thick flaccid limbs, the unintelligent arrangement of the draperies over and over again in his paintings.

The motive of the *Mandorla* supported by flying angels did not, of course, originate with Verrocchio, but it is probable that its immense popularity in Florentine sculpture was due to this Monument, which must have been familiar to all who frequented his *bottega* during the many years it remained there—years in which he was at the zenith of his fame and popularity, setting the fashion in composition and treatment. Verrocchio, doubtless, took the idea from the Tympanum of Nanni di Banco over the North Door of the Duomo. Local tradition assigns the Madonna della Cintola of the Church of La Verna, where the motive is treated by Andrea della Robbia with the greatest beauty, to 1486. If this dating be correct, it is likely that he may have adopted it from the model of Verrocchio, whose influence he felt so deeply, and that his successful rendering

\* In his Testament Verrocchio desires that the Colleoni Statue should be finished by Lorenzo, adding "because he is capable of completing it." (See Doc. IV.)

of the subject added to its popularity. It is not, however, those tranquil angels of Andrea della Robbia that were imitated by the later *fabbrica*, but these of Verrocchio, whose vivacity they exaggerated to a helter-skelter rush, and whose elaborate draperies lost in their hands all form and comeliness. On the accession of Giovanni della Robbia to the management of the *bottega*, the popularity of Verrocchio in Florence was at its height, and whether from personal predilection or from mercantile motives his work was imitated by Giovanni and his *employés* to the total exclusion of the severe classicism of Luca. We find these angels and *Mandorla* of the Forteguerri Tomb almost exactly reproduced in many of their productions of the early sixteenth century.

One last word must be given to the only part of the Monument not mentioned in the documents—the tablet below the Sarcophagus, on which are two seated *putti* supporting a scroll with the Inscription.\* This tablet is certainly part of the original design, as the Quattrocento character of the work shows, and from analogy with the sculpture and drawings of Francesco di Simone seems to be by his hand.

It may be presumed, from the wording of the document above quoted, that Verrocchio's design included a figure of the Cardinal kneeling upon a Sarcophagus. This Sarcophagus we may conclude to have been already finished before the Tomb left his workshop, since it is not men-

\* The Inscription is as follows: NICOLAO FORTGVERRAE  
CARDINALI GRATA PATRIA  
CIVI SVO DE SE OPTIME  
MERITO POSVIT A.S. M  
CCCCLXXIII. V.A. LIII

tioned in the commission to Lotti. It is possible that this relief with the Inscription formed the front panel of the Sarcophagus, for which many precedents exist in Quattrocento sculpture. It will be remembered that the decoration of the base of the Monument in Verrocchio's model—the place now occupied by this tablet—was distinctly specified to be “two *bambini* of marble with the arms of the Cardinal,” so that the relief could not have been intended for its present place. If it formed part of the original Sarcophagus it is probable that it was broken up by Masoni in the eighteenth century to make way for his own *baroque* design, at which time he would have utilised the carved slab by inserting it in its present position.

## CHAPTER XI

### THE TORNABUONI RELIEF

WE have now to consider a work officially and without interrogation attributed to Verrocchio, and almost universally accepted as being at least designed by him, yet which, so far from bearing any likeness to his style, is in direct contrast with it, a production as trivial and vulgar in sentiment as it is feeble in execution. The attribution and title of this marble relief in the Bargello Collection, inscribed "The Death of Lucrezia Pitti Tornabuoni," rests upon no surer basis than that a subject similar to that represented—the death of a woman in childbirth—is recorded by Vasari to have been executed by Verrocchio for the Church of the Minerva, Rome. Much ingenuity has been employed in the effort to identify the Bargello relief with this work, to account for its presence in Florence, and for its total dissimilarity to any authentic work of Verrocchio. I hope, however, to prove that the relief is not that of Verrocchio, which seems certainly to have existed in the Minerva, but a free adaptation by his mediocre follower, Francesco di Simone, executed to commemorate the death of a lady of the Strozzi family.

Nothing in art criticism is more surprising than the attribution to so scientific and imaginative an artist as



*Brogi, Florence*

THE "TORNABUONI" RELIEF. R. SECTION. BY FRANCESCO DI SIMONE  
BARGELLO, FLORENCE







*Brogi, Florence*

THE "TORNABUONI" RELIEF. L. SECTION. BY FRANCESCO DI SIMONE  
BARGELLO, FLORENCE

Verrocchio of work so ignoble and ignorant, at a date, too, when he was at the height of his powers, executing sculpture so superb as the Group of Or S. Michele and the Relief of the Silver Altar, and on the eve of producing the statue of the Colleoni. No contrast could be greater than that offered by the proximity in the Museum of this feeble sculpture with Verrocchio's masterpiece, the bust of a lady, by its side.

The scene is that of a woman dying in childbirth, and the announcement of the event to the bereaved husband—a theme which, in the hands of so intellectual an artist as Verrocchio, would have been treated with the dignity and elemental force of a Greek tragedy. Let the reader turn to the reproduction of his study for the Entombment (Plate XXXVII), and see with what depth of feeling and nobility he conceives the emotion of sorrow; what a contrast the reserve and dignity of this scene offers to the puerility and grotesque extravagance of the other.

The relief is a patchwork pieced together from half a dozen different sculptures, with no consistency of sentiment or idea; for while one-half of the figures are in violent action, the other half stand by abstracted and indifferent as wooden dolls. Thus, while these shrieking viragoes with hysterical gestures howl and tear their hair in frenzy, we find in their midst a stiff and motionless figure apparently copied from some slab-tomb; to the extreme left, close to the sorrowing father, a smiling youth, who, judging by his appearance and bared leg, has been imitated from a figure of S. Rock; and next to him another, equally indifferent to the scene, taken from some Roman sculpture. And this triviality of sentiment is matched by the feebleness of execution. It is inconceivable how any student of

Verrocchio, the master of anatomy, with more science in the construction of the human frame than any of his contemporaries, can attribute to him these ill-shaped figures, with their pillow-like limbs, their badly-modelled and characterless faces and puppet-like action. The work is full of faults, which betray ignorance not only of anatomy but of the most rudimentary laws of draughtsmanship. The bed (ludicrously inadequate to the size of the woman within) is in bad perspective, and there is no more relative proportion in the size of the figures than there is unity of action. The flaccid and irresolute workmanship is in direct contrast to the sharp and energetic style of Verrocchio.

Of these glaring faults the critics are well aware, and have sought in various ways to explain the incongruity of the attribution. M. Müntz, in one of his earlier writings, while accepting the relief without hesitation as the work of Verrocchio, condemned it in the following terms:

Declamation and hardness are its least defects. Not only has the artist not known how to connect the figures in a common rhythm (he has not even known how to observe the relative proportion of the heads, of which some are enormous and others quite small), but, coarsely realistic, he has done his utmost to exaggerate the gestures of the females, all of a very vulgar type, who lament around the dying woman.\*

\* "Le Tombeau de Francesca Tornabuoni," *Gaz. des Beaux Arts*, 1891, p. 277. M. Müntz changed his opinion as to Verrocchio's authorship later. In his "Histoire de l'Art," ii. p. 502, he wrote: "Les corps sont mal construits, les proportions vicieuses, et les types d'une laideur répoussante. Il faut donc admettre ou que le tombeau n'est pas celui de Francesca Tornabuoni, et porte une date bien antérieure à 1477, ou qu'il n'a pas pour auteur Verrocchio, mais bien un de ses élèves."

Such a criticism, applied to such an artist as Verrocchio, at the very epoch when he was producing his noblest, most scientific work, is incomprehensible.

M. Reymond writes of Verrocchio: "He is the most conscientious, the most preoccupied with the truth, the most realistic of the Masters of the fifteenth century. His love of precision in form, his perfection of technique are never-failing features of his art, the qualities that he possesses to a higher degree than any other Florentine."\* Yet in the same study he attributes to the artist so enthusiastically appreciated, work which sins against every one of the qualities enumerated, and is content to offer as sufficient explanation of the incongruity of such an attribution that in executing this relief "Verrocchio had not yet attained the power of surmounting all the difficulties of such a subject." Verrocchio, who at the date given to the relief was forty-two years of age, was already engaged upon the Group of Or S. Michele and the Silver Relief, had executed the David and the Putto of the Palazzo Vecchio, and was two years later to achieve his supreme masterpiece, the Colleoni Statue! Other writers assert that it was his first work in marble, and that the cause of failure lay in the difficulties of an unaccustomed technique, as though it were possible to an artist to be so far hampered by an unaccustomed technique as to change entirely his conception of form, to forget the whole of his science and training, and, dignified and noble when working in bronze and clay, to become trivial and vulgar when using the chisel.

Of all the critics, Dr. Bode only rejects decisively the

\* "La Sculpture Florentine," Florence, 1899, vol. iii. p. 199.

idea that Verrocchio is the sculptor of the relief; but even he considers it to be copied from his design, and to have been executed in his *bottega* by some mediocre assistant.

But it is time to examine the evidence that gave rise to so incongruous an attribution.

Vasari, after recording a hypothetical visit of Verrocchio to Rome, during which he was supposed to have carved certain silver statuettes for Pope Sixtus IV., continues his narrative with the statement that the value he saw set upon antique marble sculpture during the visit, so impressed him that he determined to renounce the art of the goldsmith and to devote himself thenceforward to working in marble and bronze.

Wherefore (writes Vasari) the wife of Francesco Tornabuoni having at that time died in childbirth, the husband, who had loved her much and wished to honour her dead as much as he was able, gave the sepulchre to Andrea to execute; who, upon a sarcophagus of marble, carved on one stone the lady, the birth, and her passing to another life; and near, in three figures he made three Virtues, which, as the first work in marble executed by him, were considered very beautiful: the which sepulchre was placed in the Minerva.\*

It is this sculpture which, although Vasari distinctly states that the Monument was erected in Rome, and although there is good reason, as will be seen, to believe he was correct, is identified, on no better ground than a similarity of subject, with the relief of the Bargello. Critic after critic has vainly endeavoured to prove that Vasari was mistaken in his statement, and that the Monu-

\* Vasari, iii. 359.

ment was erected, not in the Minerva, Rome, but in S. Maria Novella, Florence.

Of one error Vasari is certainly guilty. It was not the wife of Francesco,\* but of Giovanni Tornabuoni, who died at Rome in childbirth, as is proved by a letter written by him to Lorenzo dei Medici announcing the fact.

Giovanni Tornabuoni, whose sister Lucrezia was the wife of Piero il Gottoso, and the mother of Lorenzo, had married in 1466 Francesca Pitti, daughter of Luca, the rival of the Medici. Giovanni was head of the Medicean Bank in Rome, and lived in that city with his wife, this branch of the family being so definitely established there that they possessed (an important fact) a chapel in the Church of the Minerva, in which such members of the family who died in Rome were buried. On September 23, 1477, his wife Francesca died in childbirth, and the next day Giovanni addressed the following letter to his nephew Lorenzo in Florence:

MY MOST DEAR LORENZO,

I am so oppressed with grief and suffering for the most bitter and unexpected accident of my most sweet wife, that I myself know not where I am. She, as you will have heard yesterday, as pleased God, at ten o'clock at night, passed in childbirth from this present life, and the infant, her body opened, we took from her dead [these words are of importance as will presently be seen], which has been to me a double grief. I am certain, knowing well your compassion, that you will excuse me from writing to you at greater length.

In Rome 24th day of September, 1477. †

\* Francesco Tornabuoni died 1436, and his tomb, executed by Mino da Fiesole, still exists in S. Cecilia in Trastevere.

† See Doc. ix.

At the date of this death the Tornabuoni possessed no chapel in the Church of S. Maria Novella, Florence, but they did possess one in the Minerva, Rome. There is no record whatever of her body having been brought to Florence, no record of a monument ever having been erected to her in that city. It is then reasonable to suppose that she was buried in Rome, and that her Monument was erected in the family chapel in the Minerva as Vasari states.

Vasari repeats the statement more explicitly in his *Life of Ghirlandaio* :

There was at that time in Rome [he writes], Francesco Tornabuoni, a rich and honoured merchant, and very friendly to Domenico (Ghirlandaio), whose wife, having died in childbirth, as has been said in Andrea Verrocchio, and he having to do her honour in a manner befitting their nobility, caused a sepulchre to be made to her in the Minerva: he willed also that Domenico should paint all the *faccia* of the chapel where she was buried, and moreover that he should paint there a small picture in tempera. Wherefore on that wall he executed four scenes, two of S. John the Baptist, and two of our Lady, the which truly gained him much praise.\*

He then goes on to relate that it was Ghirlandaio's successful execution of these frescoes which won him the commission to paint those in S. Maria Novella.

The total disappearance of these frescoes and the similarity of subject with those of S. Maria Novella might warrant the assumption that Vasari was guilty of one of his frequent errors, did we not possess a positive proof to the contrary. This proof exists in a record made by an

\* Vasari iii. 260.

earlier writer than Vasari, Francesco Albertini, who, in his "*Opusculum de Mirabilibus novæ et veteris urbis Romæ*," printed in 1510, in describing the Church of the Minerva, writes: "*Est et alia capella de Tornaboniis Flor. depicta a Domenico Girlandario Flor.*" \*

We have thus the certainty that the Tornabuoni possessed a chapel in the Minerva decorated with paintings by Ghirlandaio, and Vasari's correctness as to Ghirlandaio's frescoes warrants the inference that he was equally correct as to Verrocchio's monument.

One of the tombs of the Tornabuoni family—that of Giovanni Francesco, who died in 1480—by Mino da Fiesole, still exists in the church, though not in one of the chapels, but it is impossible to identify with absolute certainty which chapel belonged to them, or to account satisfactorily for the disappearance of Verrocchio's monument. M. Müntz offers the following suggestion, which is at least worthy of consideration. He suggests that the Chapel of S. Giovanni Battista may be identified with that of the Tornabuoni, and for the following reasons. First, that S. Giovanni, being the patron-saint of Florence, it is natural that they should have dedicated their chapel to him. Next, that precisely at the date of the extinction of the Tornabuoni family (1588) this chapel was sold to the family of the Nari by the Dominican monks who owned the church. The Nari, either then or at some later date, entirely reconstructed the chapel, and it is extremely probable that they should at that time have ousted such tombs of their predecessors as existed to make way for those of their own family, one

\* For this quotation and the following facts see Müntz's "*Le Tombeau de Francesca Tornabuoni.*" "*Gaz. des Beaux Arts*," 1891, p. 279.

of whom—Orazio dei Nari—had already been buried in the chapel as early as 1575. The disregard of this epoch for Quattrocento work is well known, and it is surprising that even the monument of Mino has survived, which monument, it is reasonable to suppose, was originally in the chapel, and during the reconstruction removed to its present position in the aisle. The tomb of Francesca Tornabuoni, by Verrocchio, must at the same time have been either broken up or destroyed.\* A further reason for the identification of this chapel of S. Giovanni Battista with that of the Tornabuoni, exists in the fact that the frescoes of Ghirlandaio illustrated, as Vasari states, scenes from the life of that saint.

That no Monument to Francesca Tornabuoni ever existed in the Church of S. Maria Novella, Florence, the following facts are ample evidence. At the date of her death the family, as has already been said, possessed no chapel in the church, and it was only eight years later (1485) that her

\* Dr. Bode, in his "Bildwerke des Andrea del Verrocchio" (Jahrbuch der Kön. Preuss. Kunstsammlungen, 1882, B. iii. s. 94) makes the following statement: "Mr. Cavendish Bentinck, London, possesses a marble statue of Faith, three-quarter life size, which, since the back is not worked, was designed for a niche. From the rich drapery with its bunched rounded folds, the soft handling of the flesh, the arrangement of the hair, the construction of the head with its mild expression, I believe it to be a work of Verrocchio, though the execution betrays the hand of a pupil." As this statuette was bought in Rome, and was originally in the Church of the Minerva, its importance is inestimable in connection with Verrocchio's Tomb of Francesca Tornabuoni, for it is possible that it may have been one of the three figures of Virtues mentioned by Vasari as forming part of the tomb. I have done my utmost to ascertain its whereabouts, but in vain. The collection of the late Mr. George Cavendish Bentinck was sold and dispersed in 1901, and I have been unable to learn who was the purchaser of the work mentioned by Dr. Bode.

husband, Giovanni, bought the choir chapel which bears their name. This formerly belonged to the Ricci family, and was decorated with frescoes by Orcagna. On its acquisition Giovanni commissioned Ghirlandaio to efface these frescoes, and to repaint it with scenes from the life of the Baptist and of the Virgin—repetitions probably, on a larger scale, of the frescoes of the chapel in the Minerva. On one side of the window he caused the portrait of his dead wife to be painted opposite his own, which proves that it was to her memory the chapel was dedicated. Had a Monument to her been erected, as has been suggested, in another part of the Church, it would certainly have been removed to the new Chapel. Yet we have the following proof that no such tomb was there.\*

In 1565, under the Grand Duke Cosimo, the choir underwent a thorough reconstruction. The screen which separated it from the body of the church was removed, choir-stalls for the Frati were added, and other alterations made. These renovations were carried out by Vasari himself, as we know from his own statement.† Had the Monument existed in the chapel, and been removed during these alterations, as those who claim the Bargello relief to be a fragment of it affirm, it would have been at the order of Vasari himself, and it is incredible that he should in that case have made the error of stating it to be in the Minerva, Rome.

To sum up: from such evidence, affirmative and negative

\* The following entry has been adduced as a proof that Francesca Tornabuoni was buried in the Church of S. Maria Novella, an entry in the death register of the church under the date September 23, 1477. "D. Francisca de Pittis uxor Joanni Francisci." This is, however, a mere record of her death, and nothing can be deduced from it as regards a Monument.

† Vasari, vii. 710.

we may conclude that Verrocchio did actually execute a Monument to Francesca Tornabuoni, as described by Vasari, that this Monument was erected, not in S. Maria Novella, Florence, but in the Minerva, Rome, and that it was either destroyed or broken up during the restoration of the Tornabuoni chapel in the sixteenth century.

That the Bargello relief is not the work of Verrocchio is proved by the vulgarity of the sentiment, the feeble workmanship, and many stylistic differences. That it was not executed to commemorate the death of Francesca Tornabuoni is equally proved by the following facts.

The relief was originally in the Palace of the Medici,\* and in the inventory of their possessions, taken in 1666, it is thus described:

A bas-relief of white marble  $8\frac{2}{3}$  in height by  $82\frac{3}{4}$  in breadth representing a story of a lady in childbirth upon a bed, with many figures, said to be by the hand of Donatello, with ornaments carved and arabesqued with gold, with two *Guglie*, (*i.e.*, obelisk-shaped ornaments) executed on several stones, with two balls above, and in the centre a medallion in low-relief measuring  $8\frac{1}{2}$  representing a marble head of a woman, and upon the corners two marble heads with busts  $8\frac{1}{2}$  high each, with the arms of the Strozzi in the centre.†

\* It was formerly in the Bureau of the Royal Palace, and in 1805 was removed to the Gallery of the Uffizi, and later to the Bargello.

† " Un Basso rilievo di marmo bianco alto  $8\frac{2}{3}$  Largo  $82\frac{3}{4}$  entrovi una storia d'una Donna partoriente sopra un Letto con molte figure, dicesi di mano di Donatello, con adornam<sup>to</sup> intagl<sup>to</sup> e rabescato d'oro, con due Guglie d'alabastro, commesse di' più pietre, con due palline sopra et in mezzo un' tondo di basso rilievo di  $8\frac{1}{2}$  entrovi una Testa di Marmo d'una femmina e su le cantont<sup>e</sup> due teste di Marmo con buste alte  $8\frac{1}{2}$  l'uno con Arme delli Strozzi in mezzo, da detto come sopra." (Arch. di Firenze, Inventario dei Medici 1666-1688, 741, a. c. 373.)

Taking into consideration that no other sculpture representing the subject exists, or is known to have existed, in Florence, and that the *provenance* of the Bargello relief is from the Medici collection, it may with absolute certainty be identified with the bas-relief mentioned as part of the Monument in the Inventory. The attribution there to Donatello is not surprising, at a date when his work was little known and appreciated, and those who have studied these documents, even of an earlier time, will remember the frequency of such errors. The most important words of the entry are those at the end, in which is to be found a clue to the identification of the relief—"with the arms of the Strozzi in the centre." These words prove beyond possibility of doubt that the slab formed part of a monument commemorating the death, not of Francesca Tornabuoni, but of a lady of the Strozzi family.\* I have searched vainly for any record of a lady of the family having died in childbirth, but such deaths were frequent at that date, when obstetrical surgery was in its infancy. Another argument in favour of the sculpture representing the death of another lady rather than Francesca Tornabuoni, lies in the treatment of the subject. It will be remembered that Giovanni, in his letter to Lorenzo, describes the death of his wife as taking place before the birth of the child, which was cut dead from her body. In the Bargello relief the birth has already taken place before the death of the mother, and the child is represented as alive both in the arms of the nurse and when presented to the father. That it is

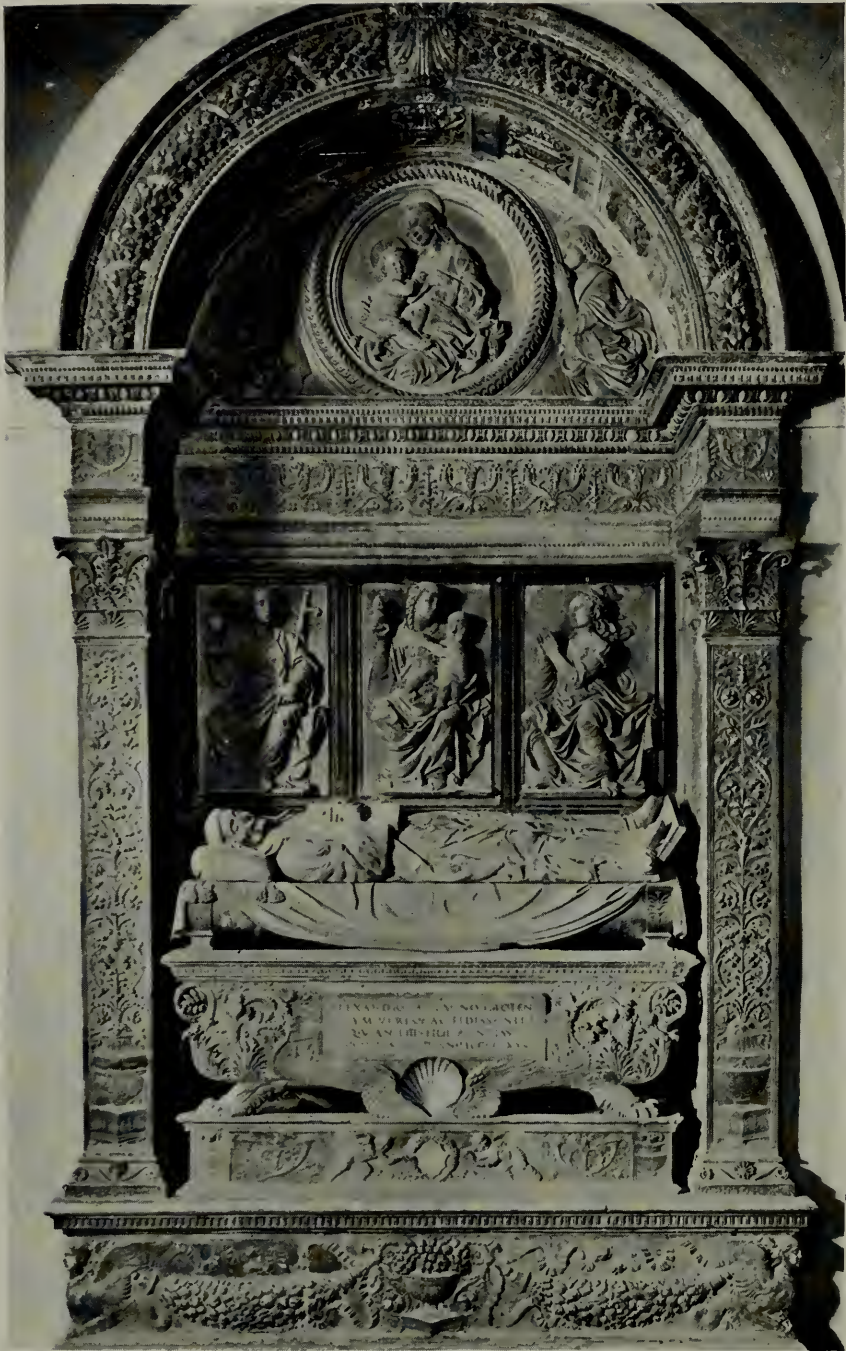
\* It is incomprehensible that while this document is quoted in full in the official catalogue of the Museum, and the sculpture is identified with the Strozzi relief there described, it should yet be entered as part of the Tornabuoni Tomb and by the hand of Verrocchio.

intended by the artist to be alive is obvious from the flexibility of the body and the cheerful expression of the face, and the sculptor of this hysterical scene would not have suppressed any additional lugubrious effect the subject might have allowed him. It is incredible that in a scene intended to be realistic, so important a circumstance should have been misrepresented, or that Giovanni Tornabuoni, whose grief, to use his own words, was "doubled by the loss of his child," should have tolerated so incorrect a delineation of the tragedy. This important variation on the event is explained, if it is accepted that the relief was carved to commemorate a death in childbirth of another lady under different circumstances. The tomb of Verrocchio for the church of the Minerva must have been executed in the Florence *bottega*, and have been therefore well known to the Florentines. It was the time of his greatest popularity and influence, and nothing could be more natural than that on the occasion of a similar death the commission for a similar monument should have been given.

The description in the Inventory is somewhat confused, but it allows us to reconstruct with a certain precision the original form of the Monument, of which the Bargello relief formed the principal part. It is evident that it was the front panel of the Sarcophagus, which was probably intended to be half embedded in the wall, since the *guglie* and balls upon it were two and not four. The Medallion with the portrait of the deceased lady must certainly have been inserted in the wall above, but whether the marble busts rested on the corners of the Sarcophagus, or were placed on either side of the Medallion, is not so easy to determine.

With the inaccuracy characteristic of the writings on





*Alinari, Florence*

TOMB OF TARTAGNI. BY FRANCESCO DI SIMONE  
S. DOMENICO, FLORENCE

this subject, the latter part of the decoration, so clearly specified in the Medicean Inventory as "two marble heads with busts," have been confused with the *three figures* of Virtues mentioned by Vasari as forming part of the Minerva Monument, and with curious inexactness identified with *four* marble statuettes of coarse and feeble workmanship in the collection of Madame André, Paris, which in spite of their slovenly handling are on this account also attributed to Verrocchio. Although there is no reason for connecting these sculptures with the Strozzi relief, yet they are of interest as being by the same hand, and by their analogy with another signed work enabling us to ascertain with approximate certainty who was the artist.

These statuettes represent seated figures of Faith, Hope, Charity and Justice. They measure 50 centimetres in height, and are of white Carrara marble, with the backs left rough-hewn, showing that they were placed against some background.\* They bear in every respect the strongest resemblance to three reliefs of a similar subject which form the background to the Tomb of Alessandro Tartagni in the Church of S. Domenico, Bologna, executed in 1477 by Francesco di Simone, the assistant of Verrocchio (Plate XXXVI). The figures of Hope and of Faith differ in no single point; attitude, gesture, arrangement of draperies, are repeated to the minutest detail. There is the same coarse modelling of the faces and pillow-like limbs, the same vulgarity of sentiment and feebleness of execution. The Charity differs slightly, in that she holds, instead of a child, the horn of plenty, that the position of the face

\* They were originally found in Florence and were bought by Madame André in 1885.

and ends of the draperies is reversed, and in other minor details. But no doubt whatever can exist that all the sculptures are by the same hand.

All the forms and mannerisms in these Virtues are to be found also in the Bargello relief, the same amorphous structure of the limbs, the same coarse modelling, the same buncy and fussy arrangement of draperies. The striking similarity in sentiment as well as in technical execution, points to Francesco di Simone as the author, not only of the Virtues of Madame André, but of the Strozzi relief.

Francesco di Simone, the assistant of Verrocchio, of whom more will be said later in studying the so-called "Verrocchio Sketch-Book," has gained a specious notoriety in the Florentine School by reason of the extraordinary faculty he possessed of imitating and combining the work of important artists in a way which, while betraying his mediocrity, has a certain superficial skill. It has been justly remarked that he never originated a fragment of decoration, much less a figure, of his numerous sculptures. He was a slavish copier of other men's work, and his sculptures are a patchwork of figures and decorative designs extracted from a dozen of the most diverse works. His one signed sculpture—the Tomb of Tartagni in Bologna—is a good illustration of this heterogeneous imitation. The dead Tartagni is made to resemble exactly the statue of Mariano Sozzini, executed in 1467 by Il Vecchietta, now in the Bargello; the general lines of the Monument, the Sarcophagus, and the base on which it rests, are copied to the minutest detail from Desiderio's Tomb of Marsuppini in S. Croce, and the decoration of the architrave is taken from a favourite design of the Robbias.

The same heterogeneous character has already been remarked in the figures of the Bargello relief, which seem copied almost at random from a dozen different paintings and sculptures. The upright old woman in the midst of the gesticulating throng from some slab-tomb; the S. Rock-like youth and female attendant opposite in the left-hand group from some work by Lorenzo di Credi; the father and the two male figures near him from some Roman sculpture;\* while the hysterical women of the death-scene have a strong, though vulgarised resemblance to the manner of Botticelli of the S. Zenobio period.†

As it seems certain that Francesco di Simone never originated a decorative design, much less a figure, it may be assumed that in the general plan of the tomb of which the relief formed a part, he followed the composition of Verrocchio in the lost Minerva Monument. It will be noticed that the entry in the Medicean Inventory corresponds in another item with Vasari's description of this

\* Dr. Bode has called attention to the resemblance of feature between the father who receives the child and the portrait of Giovanni Tornabuoni, by Ghirlandaio, in the frescoes of S. Maria Novella, and to the medal executed between 1482 and 1492 by the medallist of the Speranza. The likeness is undeniable. In all three it is the same bourgeois type with thick features and double chin. But considering the imitative faculty of Francesco di Simone, this likeness proves nothing more than that he had Verrocchio's original work in his mind in composing his adaptation. The resemblance is not so striking as is that between his Alessandro Tartagni and the Mariano Sozzani of *Il Vecchietta*, and there is no reason for supposing the two men to have been alike. Moreover the dying woman bears not the slightest resemblance to the portrait of Francesca Tornabuoni in Ghirlandaio's frescoes, which although painted after her death was no doubt copied from some medal or portrait.

† The three panels, late work of Botticelli, representing Miracles of S. Zenobio, two of which are in the possession of Dr. Ludwig Mond, London, the third in the Dresden Gallery, No. 12.

work. "The Lady" mentioned by Vasari as distinct from the two scenes of the birth and death, can have been nothing else than a portrait of the deceased, probably carved on a medallion, either on the tomb itself or above, such as is described in the Inventory as forming part of the Strozzi Tomb. It is not unlikely that the three reliefs of the Virtues above the Tomb of Tartagni were adapted from similar figures, described by Vasari as sculptured on the Minerva Monument, which, being three and not four, must, whether statuettes or reliefs, have been arranged in some similar manner. It will be remembered that the Tartagni Tomb dates from the very year (1477) of the death of Francesca Tornabuoni. What may be the *provenance* of the four statuettes by Francesco in the collection of Madame André it would be useless to speculate, but there is not the slightest ground, as has been seen, for supposing them to be part of the Strozzi Relief.

Further to emphasise the incongruity of the attribution of this relief to Verrocchio, it is well to study in this place the one existing work in which he has treated an episode equally tragic—the terra-cotta study for an Entombment, No. 97A of the Berlin Museum, already mentioned. No contrast could be greater than the dignity and pathos of this fine work and the hysterical triviality of the other. Let the reader compare the splendid construction of the body of the dead Christ, the noble attitudes and gestures of the group, the reserve and earnestness of the emotions expressed, with the ill-shaped figures, the violence and vulgarity of the Bargello relief. One knows not whether most to admire the science or the sentiment; the superb anatomy, the focus and fine balance of the composition, the well-arranged draperies beneath which each movement





*Graph. Gesellschaft, Berlin*

THE ENTOMBMENT. BERLIN MUSEUM

of the powerful limbs is felt, or the profound feeling and reverence with which the theme is treated.

The relief is much broken, but fortunately the important figures have escaped damage. Its *provenance*, save that it was found in Florence, is unknown, but it has been suggested that it was intended as the front panel of the Sarcophagus of the Cardinal Forteguerri, and that his features are reproduced in the kneeling Nicodemus who supports the body of Christ. Judging by the individual character of the face, it seems certainly to be a portrait, but the delicate structure, the high cheek-bones and sharp nose have no resemblance to the thick features of the Cardinal, as portrayed by Mino da Fiesole in his Tomb in S. Cecilia in Trastevere. In type the face is rather Venetian than Florentine, which leads one to conjecture whether the relief may not have been a study for the monument of a Doge recorded by Vasari as undertaken by Verrocchio.\* If this be the case it would have been executed in the last years of his life, during his residence in Venice, when he was preparing the model of the Colleoni statue, and this dating is warranted by the style as well as by the supreme excellence of the work. The head of Christ has everything in common with that of the Baptist of the Silver Relief, the draperies have the voluminous folds of his later manner; the flexibility of movement, the facility of technique, all point to the period of his highest development.

\* "Fra gli altri un disegno di sepoltura da lui fatto in Venegia per un doge." Vasari iii. 364.

## CHAPTER XII

### THE GROUP OF OR S. MICHELE AND THE SILVER RELIEF

ALTHOUGH the bronze group of Or S. Michele was not completed till 1483, the composition dates from sixteen years earlier, and the work belongs rather to the transitional period of Verrocchio's development than to the full perfection of the Silver Relief and the Colleoni Statue. In spite of a suggestion of hardness and rigidity in the features and gesture of the Christ, the work as a whole represents his complete emancipation from the early severity, and its dramaticism and originality of treatment, especially in the figure of S. Thomas, marks an epoch in Florentine art. In order to form a correct estimate of the merits of this—the most popular and best known of Verrocchio's sculptures—the long years between commencement and finish must be taken into consideration, as well as certain restrictions of space which have hampered his liberty in the composition.

The development of the Church of Or. S. Michele from an open loggia in which the corn market was held, to one of the most elaborately decorated buildings in existence, is too well known to need repetition. It is enough to recall to the reader that in 1355, when the open arches were filled





*Alinari, Florence*

CHRIST AND S. THOMAS. OR S. MICHELE, FLORENCE

*Face p. 159*

in by Orcagna for the protection of his shrine for the Madonna of Ugolino da Siena, an elaborate scheme of external decoration was planned. The more important of the Florentine Guilds were called upon to assist in these decorations, and were ordered, according to their respective wealth and importance, to erect statues of bronze, or of marble coloured to imitate bronze, of their patron-saints. Each guild received a pilaster, in which an elaborate tabernacle was to be inserted for the reception of the statue, with a medallion above on which the Stemma was to be painted.\* There are fourteen of such tabernacles on the walls, the earliest of which dates from the fourteenth century, but the original statues which filled them have been removed to make way for more modern work.† Another of the same date—the Madonna of the Guild of Physicians—was taken inside the church in consequence of serious anti-semitic riots, and the tabernacle remains to this day empty. The Guilds were however so slow in filling their niches that in 1404 the Signoria issued a decree threatening the forfeit of such tabernacles as remained

\* The foundation of the Guilds originated in 1282, when the populace assumed the ascendancy over the nobles. There were twenty-one Guilds, seven greater and fourteen lesser. The greater included the Exchangers, the Judges and Notaries, the Physicians and Apothecaries, the Woolworkers, the Wool merchants, the Silkweavers and the Furriers. The lesser included the Butchers, Shoemakers, Blacksmiths, Linendrapers, Stoneworkers, Vintners, Innkeepers, Oilsellers, Pork-butchers and Ropemakers (these three trades were united), Hosiers, Armourers, Locksmiths, Saddlers, Carpenters and Bakers. All other trades were attached to one or the other of these Guilds, and each Guild had its hall of assembly.

† The S. Luke executed by Nicolo di Pietro Lamberti is replaced by the statue of Giovanni da Bologna, and the S. John Evangelist by Pietro di Giovanni Tedesco by that of Baccio da Montelupo. The older statues are now in the *Cortile* of the Bargello.

empty after the lapse of ten years.\* The Guilds thereupon proceeded rapidly to give commissions for the statues, of which Donatello received no less than four. He executed the S. Peter and S. Mark in 1412, the S. George in 1415, and the S. Louis for the niche then belonging to the Parte Guelfa in 1423. The Parte Guelfa was the only corporation outside the Guilds allowed to receive a tabernacle, and it is this niche, later taken from it and bestowed on the Università dei Mercanti, which is now filled by the group of Verrocchio.

The authorship of the niche itself has been recently made the subject of a prolonged discussion, the former attribution to Donatello being contested, and the work given, with better judgment, to Michelozzo;† but since we are concerned with the Tabernacle only on account of its size, the point need not detain us. It is sufficient to note that it was designed to contain the bronze statue by Donatello of S. Louis of Toulouse, which is now over the central door of S. Croce.

The statue of S. Louis, the patron saint of the Parte Guelfa, was collocated in the niche in 1423, and remained there till 1459. In that year the Parte Guelfa became so unpopular that it was deprived of its Tabernacle in Or S. Michele, the statue of S. Louis was expelled, and the

\* "Pro perfectione ornamentorum oratorii S. Michaelis in orto deliberaverunt quod quolibet ars ex artibus civitat. Florent., que in muris sive columnis oratorii sive palatii orti S. Michaelis habet ex lateri exteriori locum, teneatur et debeat saltem infra x annos proxime secuturos fecisse fieri, et hoc in loco sibi assignato, unam figuram sive ymaginem scultam magram et honorabilem illius sancti cuius festum anno quolibet celebratur" (Gaye, i. 542).

† See numerous articles by Drs. Fabriczy and Marrai in "L'Arte" for 1902.

Stemma painted on the Medallion above effaced. Four years later it was bestowed on the Università dei Mercanti, who in 1463 gave Verrocchio the commission to execute the statue of their patron saint, Thomas. The Università was not, correctly speaking, a Guild, but was the Commercial Tribunal which presided over all the Guilds. Its selection of a patron saint is significant of the characteristic astuteness of the Florentine, the saint being chosen in approval of his incredulity. "No judgment should be given until truth was tangibly manifest" was the dictum of the tribunal, and the statue therefore, for symbolic purposes, must represent, not the saint alone, but the act of his incredulity. Thus Verrocchio, in a small niche suitable only for one figure in repose, had to fit two figures in action, a fact which should be remembered in judging the merits of the composition.

The years following the commission were the busiest of his life. He was employed by the Opera del Duomo, by the Signoria, and by the Medici on important works, and it may be due to pressure of work that he neglected the order of the Università, or possibly to some dispute as to price, of which we have the record in an existing document (Doc. xi. 1 and 2). However it may be, a period of eighteen years elapsed between the commission and completion of the group. That it was already begun in the first month of 1467 we know from a document of payment.\* The following year the commissioners bound themselves to pay him a monthly salary of twenty-five lire,

\* Jan. 15, 1467 (N.S.) was paid to "Andrea di Michele vocato Verrocchio, intagliatore, lire 300 piccole, dovuto a lui dagli operai del pilastro seu tabernacolo per una statua di bronzo a lui allogata dagli anzidetti operai" (Gaye, i. 370).

which proves that at that time he was still occupied with the work.\* In August 1470 the metal for the casting was weighed;† in 1482 the clay model was exposed to the public in the hall of the Università, but it was not till the following year, 1483, on the feast of S. Thomas, that the bronze statues were set in the Tabernacle and uncovered. The event is recorded by Landucci in his Diary as follows:

On the 21st day of June, 1483, was placed in a Tabernacle of Orto San Michele that San Tommaso at Jesus' side and the Jesus of bronze, which is the most beautiful thing that can be found, and the most beautiful head of the Saviour that has yet been made, by the hand of Andrea del Verrocchio. ‡

Vasari echoes the enthusiasm of the previous generation, showing that half a century later the work still retained its popularity.

In the S. Thomas [he writes] can be discerned his incredulity, and his excessive desire to certify the fact, and at the same time his love, which made him in a beautiful way put his hand to the side of Christ, who with most noble gesture raises one arm, and opening his robe satisfies the

\* 30 March, 1468. "Segue una deliberazione secondo la quale il camerlingo dell' università vien obbligato a sborsare ogni mese xxv lire ad Andrea 'ad faciendum figuras hereas, mictendas et collocandas in dicto tabernaculo' " (Note of Gaye, i. 370).

† Aug. 1470 si ordina che di nuovo sia pesata "materia bronzi et aliorum metallorum, quae fuit empta pro dicta universitate pro faciendo figuram seu statuam ponendam in pilastro" (*ibid.*).

‡ "E a dì 21 di giugno 1483 si pose in un tabernacolo d' Orto Sà Michele quel san Tomaso a lato a Giesù e 'l Giesù di bronzo, el quale è la più bella cosa che si truovi, e la più bella testa del Salvatore ch'ancora si sia fatta. per le mani di Andrea del Verrocchio" (Landucci, Diario Fiorentino dal 1450 al 1516, ed by J. del Badia, Firenze, 1883).

doubt of the incredulous disciple ; all is of that grace and, so to speak, divinity, that art can bestow on a figure. And Andrea, having clothed both these figures with beautiful and well-arranged draperies, has proved to us that in this art he was not inferior to Donato, Lorenzo, and the others who have preceded him ; wherefore this work well merited to be placed in a tabernacle made by Donato, and to have been held ever in the highest esteem.\*

Vasari's appreciation of the freedom and expressiveness of action is just. The gesture of S. Thomas is admirably free and natural, dramatic yet reserved. That of Christ, though somewhat stiffer, is noble, as Vasari observes. The hands of both figures are of especial beauty, and so expressive that were the statues deprived of the heads they would lose little of their dramatic significance. The sandalled feet are no less exquisitely modelled.

Hampered by want of space, Verrocchio might well have been excused had the group been stiff and constrained, yet the very source of difficulty he has ingeniously turned to account. In placing the Saint outside the Tabernacle, and on a lower level, he has not only secured sufficient space for the gesture of the Christ, but has directed the attention to him as the principal personage. So harmoniously has he united the action of the figures that, did we not know of the necessity, the grouping would be considered a masterpiece of dramatic composition. In an artist trained to the severely mathematical compositions of the Quattrocento, such originality and freedom of invention is astonishing.

If we may judge by the praise bestowed on the work in

\* Vasari iii. 363. On the hem of Christ's garment the following words are engraved : " QVIA VIDISTI ME THOMA CREDIDISTI BEATI QUI NON VIDERVNT ET CREDIDERVNT."

contemporary literature, and by the numerous imitations in painting and sculpture, the Group of Or S. Michele attained an almost unprecedented popularity. The effects of its freedom and originality were immediate and decisive, and perhaps not altogether beneficial. The departure from the old severity of composition, the innovation in grouping, necessitated though it was by the limitations of space, hit the public taste, and it is hardly too much to say that the collocation of the statues struck the death-blow to Quattrocento simplicity in sculpture. Who, judging from the constraint and dryness of the early Baptism, would have foreseen that Verrocchio would become the precursor of the *baroque* art of the 16th century? Yet it was, without doubt, in a great measure the daring innovations and the originality in composition and treatment of this group that gave the impulse for the licence and extravagance of the later school of sculpture. The freedom of action, the dramatic gesticulation, above all, the opulent folds of the draperies, were imitated and exaggerated. In the *bottega* of Verrocchio special attention was given to the arrangement of draperies, as we know by the many studies in brush and pencil which can be traced to his studio. He seems to have set himself the task (and in this Group of Or S. Michele he has superbly succeeded) of representing the beauty of folds for their own sake independent of their functional quality. Yet, with all their redundancy, the draperies of Verrocchio hide nothing of the form or movement of the body and limbs beneath, and it is only in the hands of his imitators that they became so exaggerated that the shape was lost in a chaos of pleat and fold, and the attention diverted from the essential to what should be the subordinate part. Even so excellent

an artist as Andrea della Robbia, one of those most influenced by Verrocchio, was seduced by the beauty of these draperies of the Or S. Michele group, forsook the simplicity of his early manner, and clothed his figures in robes so crumpled and corrugated, that, as in the Evangelists of the Madonna delle Carceri, Prato, they assume an aggressive importance.

Among other important artists influenced by the work was Luca Signorelli, who, in his fresco in the Church of the Santa Casa, Loreto, followed the composition almost exactly in detail as well as in general lines. Perugino imitated the features of the Christ and the figure of the Saint in his fresco of the Delivery of the Keys, in the Sistine Chapel. The Robbias copied the group precisely in the Lunette, now in the Convent-school of La Quiete, near Florence. Giovanni della Robbia, in one of his best works—the bust of Christ, in the possession of the Marchese Viviani—reproduced faithfully the features of the Christ, which superseded the former type in the Robbia *bottega*. The graceful figure of S. Thomas was adopted in all representations of youthful saints; the features were imitated, the carefully arranged hair, parted in the middle, flattened on the head and falling in luxuriant curls on the shoulders, became the fashion in Florentine painting and sculpture, and there is hardly a work of art of subsequent date which does not show in more or less degree some sign of the influence of the work.\*

Before the completion of the group of Or S. Michele,

\* Dr. Mackowsky writes: "We find the group entire and in part imitated by the Florentine woodcutters, who about the year 1490 began their activity as illustrators of books" (Verrocchio, "Künstslermonographie," p. 70).

Verrocchio had undertaken another work of equal importance—the Silver Relief for the Altar of S. Giovanni, commissioned by the Opera del Duomo (Plate XXXIX). Although executed on a scale so minute that the foremost figures are but a few inches in height, the sculpture is conceived with more freedom and on even nobler lines than the bronze statues.

The Silver Altar of S. Giovanni, formerly in the Baptistry, now in the Museo dell' Opera del Duomo, is one of our most precious possessions of Renaissance Art, not only for its intrinsic beauty, which is great, but also because in its carvings the development of Florentine Art can be traced in all its stages, from the middle of the 14th to the end of the 15th century. It was begun in 1366 by the goldsmiths Betto di Geri and Leonardo di Ser Giovanni—the latter celebrated for his still more elaborate Silver Altar of the Pistoia Cathedral; but the work was continually interrupted, and it was not till the beginning of the 15th century that the eight frontal reliefs were completed. At that time, though still lacking the dedicatory figure of the Baptist and the surmounting cross, the altar was exposed and consecrated in the Church of S. Giovanni, for which it was executed. In 1451 the commission for the statuette to fill the central shrine was given to Michelozzo, who completed in a few months the weak and coarsely carved figure which harmonises so ill with the delicate and intricate decorations. In 1459 the crucifix—a reliquary containing a fragment of the true Cross—was added, the work of Antonio Pollaiuolo and Betto di Francesco Betti. In 1476 it was decided to complete the lateral reliefs, and commissions for models were issued to Antonio Pollaiuolo, to Verrocchio, and to other



*Alinari, Florence*

DECOLLATION OF THE BAPTIST. MUSEO DELL' OPERA DEL DUOMO, FLORENCE



sculptors of minor importance. The commission was given on July 24th, 1477, and by the 2nd of August Verrocchio had completed and sent in two models, of which only one was accepted. In 1480 he had finished the work in silver, and received for it payment of over 397 florins (Doc. x.).

The Altar in design and detail is one of the most beautiful specimens of goldsmith's work in existence. It is wrought in solid silver, inlaid with coloured enamels, which flash and glow like jewels from their metal setting. The decorations are in the Gothic style, richly and elaborately carved with pilasters and pinnacles of every imaginable device. In the top frieze and corner pillars are innumerable tabernacles lined with enamels and filled with dainty silver statuettes. The twelve reliefs represent scenes from the Life of the Baptist, beginning with the Birth by Pollaiuolo on the left side and ending with Verrocchio's Decollation on the right. Thus, owing to the sequence of the narrative the finest of the reliefs have the least important place, being at the present level of the Altar, so near the ground that it is difficult fully to appreciate their beauty.

The sculpture of Verrocchio represents the beginning of the best epoch of his development, which reached its culminating point in the statue of the Colleoni. Not even Pollaiuolo has better interpreted the concentration of muscular force, nor Leonardo of intellectual energy. It is difficult to realise that these vehement figures, with their large gestures and free movements, are executed on so minute a scale. The theme, though dramatically conceived, is treated with the same dignity and restraint as the terra-cotta Entombment. Verrocchio has chosen, as

usual, to represent transitional movements, and the scene is vivid with life and action. We seem actually to perceive the play of muscle rippling up the back of the executioner, who concentrates with a splendid gesture his forces for the blow. The suspense of the pages who watch with horror, and seem nerving themselves to bear the shock, communicates itself to us. To the right two warriors vehemently dispute, one seeming disposed to interfere in favour of the Baptist, while the other threateningly resists. The fierce words seem issuing from the parted lips of the one, the abrupt action of the other has the rapidity of a flash of lightning. By no other artist, not even by Pollaiuolo himself, has brute force been so superbly rendered as in this tiny figure, which seems to vibrate with concentrated wrath. The focus-point of this vehement scene—the Baptist—kneels absorbed and abstracted, a solemn figure, whose repose gives stability to the vivid movement of the rest. With the exception of the “Discord” and the Berlin Entombment, this is our only example of a scene by Verrocchio with several figures in combined action, and like these it proves his power of dramatic interpretation and of harmonious and well-balanced composition.

Rarely has the nude in action been so successfully rendered as in the torso and limbs of the executioner. The feeling for the resistance of hard muscle—the trained muscle of the athlete, the tense thews and sinews of the vigorous limbs—is admirably given. The characteristic beauty of the hands of all the figures is remarkable, even on this small scale each nerve and vein being indicated with the perfection of delicate modelling. As is usual with Verrocchio he has made them as expressive as the faces.

Notwithstanding the grandeur of the general effect, every detail is wrought with the utmost care, but so held in place that it is only on examination we perceive that the decoration of the armour and dresses, and of the plate held by the page, are finished with such elaboration that they might serve as goldsmith's models for the objects represented.

A comparison between Verrocchio's relief and that of Antonio Pollaiuolo executed at the same date, is of interest. For once the two artists seem to have changed places. Verrocchio, energetic always, but with a dominating feeling for beauty and grace, shows here a vehemence comparable only to Pollaiuolo's figures of the Hercules in the tiny painting of the Uffizi, and of the engraving of the "Ten Nudes." Pollaiuolo, on the other hand, in his Birth of the Baptist, shows less of his usual energy, but in the stag-like figure in the foreground has created a type of female grace Botticellesque in its poetic charm.

Had we no certain date for this relief of Verrocchio it would fall naturally into place at this late epoch, by reason of its resemblance to other work of the same period. The Colleoni statue is already suggested in the fierce faces and gestures of the warriors, the suave grace of the S. Thomas of Or S. Michele in the youth who holds the charger. The resemblance of the Baptist to the Christ of the Berlin Entombment helps us to fix with tolerable certainty the date of that relief. Treatment of draperies and of hair, freedom of movement, facility of execution, are alike in all these works.

The relief is exceedingly high, to correspond with the earlier work on the front of the altar. "Più che mezzo rilievo" was exacted in the commission. The executioner,

indeed, is a free-standing statuette, flattened in front, and attached to the metal plate by a screw. The result of this separation from the background is a somewhat violent effect of perspective given to the floor, the only defect in this admirable work.

As has been already suggested in the opening chapter, the additional energy shown by Verrocchio in this relief, the inspiration which impelled him so to concentrate his forces, can be due to no other cause than the influence upon him of Leonardo. At the date of its execution Leonardo was already twenty-five years of age, and was, if not actually living under Verrocchio's roof, as in the previous year, at least in the closest intimacy. Leonardo's superb drawing of a Warrior in the Malcolm Collection of the British Museum, which reproduces almost exactly the features and details of the armour of the warrior to the right, may have been imitated from the relief of Verrocchio or, as seems more probable, Verrocchio may have taken the type from Leonardo. But to whichever artist is due the origination of the actual features, the fiery spirit embodied in the figure is in its essence the peculiar quality of Leonardo's genius.

The impression made by the sculpture upon Florentine art was, like that of the Group of Or S. Michele, deep and lasting. These fierce warriors, with winged helmets and elaborate breast-plates, were imitated in reliefs and in all kinds of decorative sculpture. An infinite number of such heads exist in marble and bronze and Robbia ware, proving the popularity of the type.

Some mention must be made in connection with this work of a terra cotta model in the possession of M. A. de Eperjesy, Rome, which is claimed by Dr. Ulmann to be

the original study executed by Verrocchio in 1477.\* To me the model seems to belong to that large group of imitations executed for purposes of deception. The very variations on the original, cited by Dr. Ulmann in favour of its authenticity, rouse, on the contrary, one's suspicions, for we know how invariable is this practice with the professional imitator. The work can be best judged, however, on its artistic merits.

The modelling of the faces and nude parts, so vigorous in the original, are but roughly indicated, and with a feebleness and ignorance betraying the hand of the artisan rather than the artist, while the details of the armour are as carefully finished as in the metal relief. The faces, so expressive and so delicately modelled in the original, have in this clay sketch a vacuous weakness grotesquely incongruous with the gestures. This attention to minor detail and neglect of the essentials is contrary to all the habits of Verrocchio, and especially opposed to his treatment of the silver relief, where the fine modelling of the nude and the expressive character of the faces and hands keep the details of ornament in due subordination. In the clay model the only carefully-worked heads are those of the Baptist and the Page, the author, probably feeling

\* H. Ulmann, "Il Modello del Verrocchio per il rilievo del dossale del d'argento" ("Arch. Stor. dell' Arte," 1894, p. 50). It is contrary to my habit to criticise a work without acquaintance with the original, but in this case, although the relief is known to me only through the reproduction given by Dr. Ulmann, the faults are so glaring that any hesitation as to its authenticity is impossible.

In the Collection of Baron Adolph de Rothschild, Paris, are two carefully finished statuettes in terra-cotta, one of the page, the other of the warrior grasping the club, which are accepted by Dr. Bode as genuine studies for the Silver Relief. They are unknown to me even by photograph.

his incapacity for reproducing the energy of the others, has discreetly left them in the rough but slightly modelled though they are, they show the feebleness of the artist's hand and brain. In the whole model there is that indefinable yet unmistakable *modern* look impossible to reconcile with Quattrocento work ; and there is no doubt whatever but that, like the Forteguerri Relief of S. Kensington, it is a forgery of comparatively recent date.



*Alinari, Florence*

MADONNA AND SAINTS. DUOMO, PISTOIA. BY VERROCCHIO  
AND LORENZO DI CREDI

*Face p. 172*



## CHAPTER XIII

### THE PISTOIA ALTAR-PIECE

ANOTHER work of a very different character to the Relief of the Silver Altar was being executed simultaneously with it in the *bottega* of Verrocchio—the Madonna and Saints of the Cathedral of Pistoia. Attributed to Leonardo in the seventeenth century,\* and later to Lorenzo di Credi, it was Morelli who first detected in the work the hand of Verrocchio himself, and the accuracy of this judgment has been recently attested by the discovery of certain documents.

The history of the painting is as follows. The Chapel of the Sacrament in which it still hangs over the Altar, was formerly separated by a wall from the body of the Cathedral, and was called the Oratory of the Madonna di Piazza. It was constructed as a memorial to Donato dei Medici, Bishop of Pistoia, who died 1474, and it was in honour of his memory that the Altar-piece was commissioned, the subject representing the Madonna, with the Baptist as Patron Saint of Florence on one side, and S. Donato as Patron of the Bishop on the other.

The exact date at which Verrocchio received the commission is not known, but we gather from the documents

\* See Salvi, *Historia di Pistoja*, 1657, ii. 422.

that it was somewhere about 1477 or 1478. It met with the same neglect as the other work for this Cathedral, but this time the cause of the delay is revealed in a letter written by the Operai del Duomo where we read that the work had been put by unfinished because the executors of the Bishop's testament refused to pay the stipulated price. The letter is dated November 1485, and records the result of an inquiry as to the state of the picture and the cause of the delay. The agent wrote that the painting was at that time nearly finished ("la quale si dice esser facta o mancarvi pocho"), and that it would have been completed *more than six years before* had the debt owing to Verrocchio been paid. "It is said," the document continues, "to be a very beautiful thing, and brought to its present point with great art, and would be an honour and ornament to the city." (Doc. XIII.) The Operai finish by demanding permission of the executors to forward the money in order that the work might at once be completed and placed on the Altar.

At the time of this visit of the agent Verrocchio was engaged upon the most important work of his life—the Colleoni statue—and probably far too busy to put his own hand any further to the painting. The style of the work shows that he entrusted the completion to Lorenzo di Credi, whose additions are easily distinguishable.

Morelli considered the entire design to be the work of Verrocchio, as well as the painting of the two Saints, the modelling of whose faces and limbs he found specially characteristic.\* The construction of the figures, the meagre build, the knotted joints, the emphasis of the muscles and bones, correspond exactly with his work, and are in every

way worthy of his brush. They have only to be compared with the feeble figures of the Virgin and Child—the work of Credi—to prove that thus much at least of the Altar-piece was completed by Verrocchio himself. Let the masterly painting of the draperies, especially of the Bishop's tunic be contrasted with the puffy ill-arranged folds of the Virgin's robes, which fall so clumsily over the 'pillow-like legs, and lie in meaningless squares at her feet. It is characteristic of Verrocchio that he should have preferred himself to execute the male figures and have left the Madonna to his assistant. The landscape, judging by the character of the rocks and trees in the middle distance, seems to have been designed, and in part painted, by Verrocchio, as well as the admirably executed architectural details, which bear so strong a resemblance to the marble throne, designed by Alessio Baldovinetti, in the Chapel of the Cardinal of Portugal in S. Miniato.

A silver-point drawing by Credi in the Kupferstich-Kabinett, Dresden, seems to be his study for the figure of the Virgin, and like all his black and white work is more satisfactory than his finished painting. The drawing, however, is an example of the weak, irresolute lines and soft blurred technique characteristic of his style, and which contrast so strongly with the energy and decision of Verrocchio's work.

The Pistoia Altar-piece was repeated by Credi in all its details (the Saints only being changed to suit the dedication), in the painting now in the Naples Museum—the Madonna with SS. Leonardo and Girolamo, officially ascribed to Ghirlandaio. The Virgin and Child are, with the exception of a few details of the draperies exactly similar, as are also the throne, balustrade and other

accessories, but Credi has been unable to imitate in the two Saints the strength and concentration of Verrocchio's work. In these the strenuous earnestness of the original is completely lacking, the S. Leonardo being a trivial doll-like figure, and the S. Girolamo merely hysterical.





*Anderson, Rome*

THE COLLEONI STATUE. VENICE

## CHAPTER XIV

### THE COLLEONI STATUE

It is rare in the history of art that the last work of a master is his greatest, and it is some compensation for Verrocchio's early death that he was spared the decline and decay of faculty inseparable from old age. His development, as far as we are able to judge in the dearth of certain dates, was steady and sure from youth to middle-age, a continuous widening of vision, increase of energy, emancipation from restrictions of brain and hand. As far as the Bronze Group of Or S. Michele, the progress has been gradual, and we are able to trace it step by step in natural sequence. But between this work and Verrocchio's supreme achievement—the Colleoni Statue—so vast a stride is made as to be unaccountable in the ordinary course of human development. Some extraordinary stimulus had been received, and this stimulus can be attributed to no other cause than contact with the genius of Leonardo.

It is not too much to say that the Colleoni is the finest equestrian statue in existence, perhaps the grandest monument of the Renaissance. It is the incarnation of audacity and conquest, and embodies in concentrated measure all the exuberant physical and intellectual forces of the epoch. The Venetians refused to give it the honourable site

claimed by the dead General, and with a petty quibble relegated it to a little-frequented and unimportant square. Verrocchio by the grandeur of his work avenged the State's ingratitude. The statue dominates, not only the small piazza where it is placed, but lifted high above its insignificant surroundings, seems to sway and subdue Venice herself with its imperious sovereignty.

Bartolommeo Colleoni of Bergamo, one of the greatest generals and wealthiest princes of the fifteenth century, was equally celebrated for his audacity in the field and for the magnificence of his private life. Like Federigo di Montefeltro and Lodovico Gonzaga, he passed his life between the hardships of battle and the luxury of his court. His castle of Malpaga, near Bergamo, still testifies, by the beauty of its frescoes and decorations, to his love of the arts. There he held his brilliant court, to which all the North Italian Princes thronged to take part in the feasts and tournaments which were unrivalled for their magnificence. Most of his life had been spent as *condottiere* General in the service of the Venetian State, to which, by his military skill and bravery, he had added much territory and *prestige*. He died February 1, 1475, aged seventy-five, and as a last proof of his devotion to the Republic, bequeathed to it a large part of his wealth. In his testament he expressed the wish that in return for his services a bronze equestrian statue should be erected to his memory in the most important square of Venice, the Piazza di S. Marco. For more than four years after his death the Republic neglected this request, and it was not until July 30, 1479, that the Signoria took the matter into consideration. They then decided to issue commissions to certain sculptors to prepare models for the statue,



*Alinari, Florence*

STATUE OF GATTEMELATA. BY DONATELLO. PADUA

*Face p. 192*





*Alinari, Florence*

BRONZE HEAD OF HORSE. NAPLES MUSEUM

*Face p. 192*





*Alinari, Florence*

THE COLLEONI STATUE. VENICE

*Face p. 178*



but refused to allow its erection on the site desired by the dead General, and chose instead the small and unimportant Piazza di SS. Giovanni e Paolo, because, the Scuola di S. Marco being situated there, they could by a verbal quibble satisfy their conscience as to fulfilling the letter of the testament. But although they refused the Monument of the Bergamask the most honourable place in the city, they were desirous that it should be as splendid as possible, and spared no trouble in obtaining the best work. Commissions were given to Verrocchio, to Vellano of Padua, and to Leopardi of Ferrara, to prepare horses of colossal size, the material with which they were to be constructed being left to their own choice. The importance given in the history of the statue to the horse and the neglect of any mention of the rider, would be almost comic did we not know that in the modelling and casting of the horse the difficulty lay. It was a model of the horse that was required from the artists, and the statue is spoken of in contemporary literature as "*il Cavallo*," occasionally with the additional words, "*upon which was Bartolommeo da Bergamo*." Knowledge of equine anatomy was at that date exceedingly rare, and in the whole of Italy there existed but one modern equestrian statue of bronze—the *Gattemelata* of Donatello, executed about 1444. Figures of bronze were common enough, but the task of casting so huge a mass of metal as a colossal horse was formidable, and it may be presumed that the commissions for so important a work were bestowed only on those sculptors who had by previous success in the same line given proof of their capability. The choice of Vellano, an artist well known to the Venetians as their own countryman and the assistant of Donatello in the casting of the Padua statue,

is easily understood. Leopardi was equally well known and appreciated in the Venetian State; but the selection of the Florentine Verrocchio by a foreign Government must certainly have been due to some convincing proof of his capability, not only as a bronze founder, but as a master of equine anatomy. I desire to lay special stress on this, with reference to a certain work to be considered later—the bronze Head of a Horse in the Naples Museum, there attributed to Donatello—which I consider to be by Verrocchio, to have been executed by him several years before the commission for the Colleoni statue, and to have attained a celebrity among the princes and artists of Italy. Vasari mentions in his collection of drawings two studies of horses by Verrocchio, with proportional measurements for enlarging, and a terra-cotta relief of a horse's head copied from the antique.\* The existence of these proves his interest in horse anatomy. Of this more will be said presently. Here it is sufficient to draw attention to the probability that Verrocchio must have already acquired renown as a sculptor of horses, to have received the commission of the Venetian Republic for a work of so much importance.

The three sculptors, Vellano, Leopardi, and Verrocchio, received the commission to prepare a model of the horse immediately after the deliberation of the Signoria in 1479, and by the summer of 1481 that of Verrocchio was already completed. It is certain that he made studies in Venice for the model, for, as it will be seen later, the resemblance

\* "Sonvi ancora due cavalli, con il modo delle misure e centine da farli di piccoli grandi, che venghino proporzionati e senza errori: e di rilievo di terra-cotta è appresso di me una testa di cavallo ritratta dall' antico, che è cosa rara." (Vasari, iii. 364.)



*Anderson, Rome*

BARTOLOMMEO COLLEONI. VENICE

*Face p. 180*



of his horse in attitude and construction to the antique bronze steeds of S. Marco is most striking, but that it was actually executed in the Florence *bottega* is proved by an existing document. In a letter dated July 12, 1481, the Ferrarese Ambassador to Florence, Antonio di Montecatini, demands of his master, Ercole d'Este, on behalf of the sculptor, a free passage for the life-sized model of a horse through his States, on its way from Florence to Venice (Doc. xiv.).

A curious and interesting record of the exhibition in Venice of the three rival models is given by an eye-witness, Felix Fabri, a Dominican monk from Ulm, who wrote in 1483 a book of his travels.

In a chapel attached to the Church of the Minorites [he wrote], there stood a horse, built together with wondrous art. The Venetians, imitating the customs of the heathen nations, once determined to reward one of their captains who had fought bravely for the Republic and gained much new territory for it by his valour, by setting up an everlasting memorial of him and placing a brazen statue of a horse and his rider in one of the streets or squares of the city. In order that this might be done as splendidly as possible, they sought out sculptors throughout their country and ordered each of them to make a horse of any material he chose, and they would then choose one out of the three best horses, and have a horse cast in brass on the model of that one. Besides the price of the statue. they proposed to bestow especial honours upon the artist who made the best shaped horse. So three sculptors met in Venice and one of them made a horse of wood, covered with black leather, which is the horse that stands in the aforesaid chapel, and so life-like is this figure that unless its unwonted size and want of motion betrayed that the horse was artificially made, a man would think it was

a real living horse. Another sculptor made a horse of clay, and baked it in a furnace; it is admirably formed and of a red colour. The third moulded an exquisitely shaped horse out of wax. The Venetians chose this latter, and rewarded the artist. But as to what will be done about casting it, I have not yet heard: perhaps they will give the matter up.\*

According to Vasari, the choice of the Florentine Verrocchio roused the jealousy of certain Venetians, who intrigued with such success that while Verrocchio received the commission to cast his horse in bronze, Vellano of Padua was ordered to execute the rider. On hearing this, Verrocchio was so enraged that he broke up his model and returned to Florence, refusing to have anything more to do with the work. Vasari's anecdote, though probably apocryphal, is worth quoting.

Andrea, therefore, the model of the horse completed, had begun to brace it for casting in bronze; when by the favouring of certain gentlemen, it was decided that Vellano of Padua should make the figure and Andrea the horse. The which Andrea having understood, when he had broken the head and legs from his model, he returned all in wrath and without saying a word to Florence. Hearing this, the Signoria gave him to understand that he should never again dare to come back to Venice, or his head should be cut off. To this he replied in writing that they should refrain from that, because when they had cut it off it was not in their power to reunite the head to a man, and especially such a head as his, as he would have been able to do to that which he had broken from his horse, and more beautiful than before. After the which reply, which was not displeasing to the Signoria, he was made to return to Venice with double provision, where,

\* "The Book of the Wandering of Felix Fabri, 1483." Trans. by Aubrey Stewart (Palestine Pilgrim Text Society, London, 1896.)

when he had repaired the first model, he cast it in bronze, but he did not entirely finish it; for being heated, and having taken cold in casting it, he died after a few days in that city, leaving incomplete, not that work only, which although it lacked a little in the chiselling, was placed in the site for which it was intended, but another also that he did at Pistoia, &c.\*

Whatever truth there be in this anecdote, it illustrates at least the kind of temper attributed to Verrocchio by his fellow citizens—the haughtiness and independence we should have expected from the sculptor of the Colleoni statue. We know in any case that the commission for both the horse and its rider was given to him, and that Vellano and Leopardi retired from the competition. The price of the statue agreed upon was 1800 ducats, equivalent to about 100,000 francs of our money.

The cause of his death recorded by Vasari—that he caught cold during the process of casting the bronze—is certainly untrue, for he died leaving the statue still in the clay. The model, however, seems to have been fully completed by him before his death, though not until the very last months. By June 25, 1488, it was still unfinished, as we gather from the words of his testament executed at that date, on the first warning of the illness which caused his death.

I leave [he dictated to the notary], the work of the horse begun by me for him (Lorenzo di Credi), to complete, if it might please the illustrious Lord Duke of Venice. I humbly entreat their lordships that they should deign to allow the said Lorenzo to finish the said work, because he is capable of carrying it to completion. (Doc. IV.)

\* Vasari, iii. 367, &c.

Verrocchio, who, in this testament, describes himself as languishing in body, must have recovered, and lived long enough after to bring the work to full completion himself, as is proved by the characteristic style of the most minute details of the ornament. This judgment is confirmed by a document written by Lorenzo di Credi, in which he distinctly states that at the time of Verrocchio's death the figures of both horse and rider were completed in the clay. The document is of importance as proving that the Signoria originally fulfilled the desires of Verrocchio expressed in his testament, and gave the task of casting the statue to Credi, who, perhaps having no practical knowledge of metal-casting, or feeling himself incompetent to undertake so important a work, transferred the commission to one Giovanni di Andrea di Domenico, a Florentine sculptor. In the document, which bears the date October 7, 1488, Lorenzo states that :

Andrea del Verrocchio having received the commission from the Signoria of Venice to execute the horse and the figure of bronze of Bartolommeo da Bergamo for the price of 1800 Venetian ducats, and the said Andrea having died when he had executed the above-mentioned figure and horse in clay only, and when of the aforesaid sum 380 ducats only had been paid to him, he, Lorenzo, had undertaken to carry to completion the aforesaid work for the price of the remaining 1420 ducats. Wherefore the said Lorenzo on the day, month and year above-named, commissioned to do and complete the said figure and horse of bronze to Giovanni d'Andrea di Domenico, Florentine sculptor, for the said sum, promising to do it in such a manner that the Signoria of Venice should be content with it.\*

\* Vasari, iv. 565, note 1.

Of Giovanni di Andrea di Domenico nothing further is known but that he was born in 1455 of a family of sculptors, but it is probable that Lorenzo had some experience of his capability as a bronze-founder, and possible that he may have been employed by Verrocchio himself in that capacity.

Whether the Venetian senate suspected the incapability of Credi for so important a work, or objected to his transfer of the commission, is not known, but the order was withdrawn from him and given in 1490 to Alessandro Leopardi, of whose experience and ability as a metal worker they had ample proof.\* It must be allowed that in dismissing Credi and choosing Leopardi, the Signoria showed their judgment. Nothing could be more admirable than the technical work of the casting, nor could any base be better calculated to set off the grandeur of the statue and enhance its dignity than the beautiful and symmetrical pedestal designed by him.

Whether Leopardi deliberately intended to rob Verrocchio of his fame as the sculptor of the statue, or whether the mistake arose without intention on his part, is uncertain, but the fact remains that he received from his contemporaries the entire credit of the work. He became known to the people by the name of "Alessandro del Cavallo"; Luca Paccioli, in the dedication of his book on Geometry to Guidobaldo of Urbino, speaks of the statue as executed by him,† as do other contemporary writers, and

\* Leopardi had been since 1487 banished from Venice, and in 1490 he was recalled in order to finish the Colleoni Statue "ut tali modo possit perficere equum et statuam ill. Bartholomaei de Collionibus iam cum multa laude ceptam."

† "E non manco de Alexandro Leopardi la stupenda enea statua equestre del famoso capitano Bort<sup>mio</sup> da bergamo che con sua lima a

even in our own day it is constantly suggested that a large part of the actual sculpture is due to him.\* It seems probable that Leopardi's intention was fraudulent, for he has claimed the statue as his own in the equivocal inscription which decorates in huge letters the girth of the horse—ALEXANDER . LEOPARDVS . V . F . OPUS—leaving to the observer the choice of interpreting the initial letter F either as *Fecit* or *Fudit*.

As has been already stated, the statue must have been entirely finished by Verrocchio himself before his death, for the choice of decorations of both armour and harness, as well as the sharpness and energy of execution are in the highest degree characteristic, and contrast strongly with those of Leopardi on the pedestal. Let the fierce lions' heads or the horse's trappings—part of the Colleoni arms—be compared with that carved by Leopardi on the stemma below, and the acanthus leaves, or any of the sharply-cut ornaments of the armour, with the feebler designs of the pedestal, and the difference will be appreciated. In the frieze below the plinth there are Medusa heads without life and winged horses without energy. Their forelegs hang limply from their bodies, and they take their part in a design of graceful curves rather in the suave style of Rossellino than the sharp manner of Verroc-

fection condusse." (Luca Paccioli, "*Summa de Arithmetica geometria*," &c.) first published in Venice in 1494. Cited by Cigogna *Delle Inscrizioni Veneziane*, Venezia, 1827, ii. 299. Cigogna himself had no doubt but that the entire statue was by Leopardi.

\* Cavalcaselle and Crowe consider that the horse's head is the work of Leopardi, basing their idea on what they consider its too small proportion and the inferiority of the modelling. To me the head seems to be perfect, both in proportion and modelling, and thoroughly characteristic of Verrocchio. The mane, with its luxuriant curls clustered in his favourite manner, is especially characteristic.

chio. Leopardi was a great artist, as this pedestal proves, but he had neither the strength nor the originality of Verrocchio, nor that energy which reveals itself in the least touch of the detailed ornament as much as in the general conception of the work.

It was not until eight years after Verrocchio's death—on March 21, 1496, that the statue, chiselled and gilded, was uncovered to the public. Marino Sanuto, in his diary, thus records the fact :

Note.—That on Monday, the 21 day of March, 1496, at Venice, was uncovered the bronze horse of Bartholomeo Coglion of Bergamo, formerly captain-general of our land forces, placed in the Campo di San Zanepolo, the which, until now, masters were occupied with gilding, a most beautiful work, and all went to see it.

He then goes on to state that the statue was the work of Leopardi, who received as recompense besides much other money the annual sum of 100 ducats.\*

One is apt to forget, in appreciating the perfection of form and grace of movement of Verrocchio's horse, the difficulties he had to overcome in its construction, chiefly that of combining freedom of action with the due partition of weight necessary to support so huge a mass of metal. This difficulty had proved too great for Donatello in his Gattamelata horse, the legs of which are too short and

\* " Nota: chome adi 21 marzo 1496 de luni a Veniexia fo discoverto el cavalo eneo di bortholamio coglion da bergamo olim capitano zeneral nostro da terra posto sul campo di san zane polo el qual fina horra erra stato maestri a dorarlo, opera bellissima, et tutti andoe a veder et e da saper che il maestro che lo fece chiamato Alexandro de Leopardis veneto oltra molti danari che ebbe da poi compito per il conseio di X. li fo dato di provisione annatim in vita soa duchati 100." (Marino Sanuto. Diarii, Book I., part i.)

thick for good proportion, and too wide spread for grace, and he was unable to dispense with the disfiguring prop for the raised leg, which robs the figure of ease and realism. And for all this the legs appear too weak to support the ponderous body. The horse of the Gattamelata statue was an experiment, and as such may be criticised without want of respect to Donatello's powers. It was the first bronze horse that had been cast in Italy in modern times, and in spite of its build being that of the war-horse of the epoch, the construction of body and head proves that Donatello had studied more from antique models than from the living animal. His horse is as clumsy in action as that of Verrocchio is light and graceful. That it was a horse of a heavier breed matters nothing in the argument, for had he been able to give it the power and energy fitting to its build, it might, equally with Verrocchio's, have impressed us with its force and fire. As it is we have the unpleasant sensation of the huge carcass crushing the feeble legs, which seem spread apart and about to collapse beneath the weight. Verrocchio has partitioned the weight of his horse's body with so much skill that the attitude could not be more easy and lifelike, and by this perfection of balance he has been able to dispense with any support for the lifted leg. Horse and rider seem actually alive and in movement, yet as is the case with the Putto of the Palazzo Vecchio, the action is final and allows no uncomfortable suggestion of walking off the pedestal, which we receive from so many modern equestrian statues. Verrocchio has known how to combine vigorous movement with the finality necessary to monumental sculpture.

The figure of the General is noble and powerful, and by

its superior concentration of energy focuses the attention, which might otherwise be centred on the horse. He is upright in the saddle—almost standing in the stirrups, and with a superb gesture dominates and inspires the movements of the animal. The unity of action between horse and rider is complete, and recalls to the mind Vasari's anecdote of Verrocchio's wrath at the commission to another sculptor of the figure. He has, it is evident, conceived the statue as a whole, and the horse requires the rider almost as much as the rider the horse. What would have been the result had a figure by Leopardi or Vellano been set upon the superb steed of Verrocchio !

The Bartolommeo Colleoni represents the typical *condottiere* prince of the Quattrocento, embodying in concentrated measure his audacity, self-confidence, and force of will. The menacing eyes, the formidable gesture, the tense muscles, the swing of the body in the saddle, give an impression of indomitable strength unequalled in art. The type has been a favourite one with the Florentines since the days of Donatello and Castagno, but even the Pippo Spano of S. Apollonia, the S. George of Or S. Michele, and the swaggering heroes in the paintings of Signorelli, must yield the palm to the Colleoni of Verrocchio.\*

Yet typical as it is, the features of the General are faithfully reproduced, as their resemblance to the medal by Marco Giudizani proves, though compared to the fierce head of the statue, that of the Venetian medallist seems almost feeble. The beetling brows, the hooked nose, the

\* M. Müntz wrote : " Verrocchio has known how to reproduce that superb self-confidence which made the dying general exclaim to the Venetian Ambassador 'The Republic should never again allow to a General such unlimited power as to me.' "

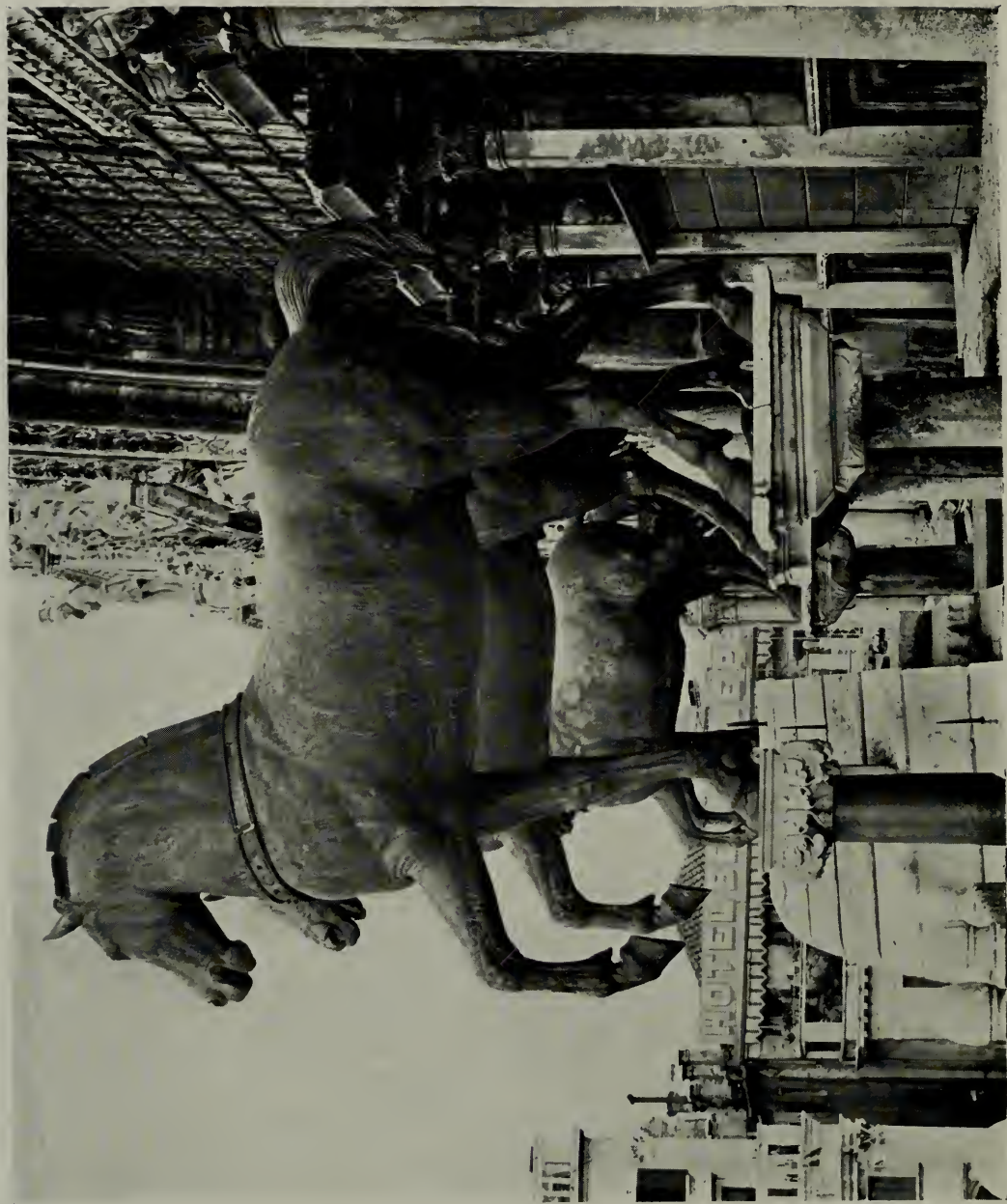
compressed lips and wrinkled jowl are alike in both, but Verrocchio has added to the aquiline features a keenness and intellectual energy which makes the face at first glance resemble that of Dante.

Whether Verrocchio copied the face from the medal of Giudizani we have no means of proving. It is possible that he had a more satisfactory portrait to go by either in painting or sculpture, though none of them have come down to us, for it is hardly likely that so keen a lover of art as was Bartolommeo Colleoni should have passed his long life without sitting more than once for his portrait.

It is of interest, in respect to the influence of Leonardo upon Verrocchio, and the sudden burst of energy shown in the Venice statue, to note in the unfinished painting of the former—The Adoration of the Magi in the Uffizi—a figure of a warrior on horseback, which bears the closest resemblance in feature and expression to the statue of Verrocchio. We have again the keen face of Dante, dashed on the panel with a few bold brush-sweeps. The warrior stretches his arm with a splendid gesture of command. It is Bartolommeo Colleoni in action, and, once observed, the two figures become inseparably connected in the mind. The painting was begun by Leonardo in 1481, the year in which Verrocchio's model of the horse was despatched to Venice. It is probable that the sketch is the result of some mutual studies by the two artists executed while Verrocchio was at work on the statue. The spirited head of the horse resembles also that of Verrocchio, having the same noble expression, the same accentuation of bone, and the same tufted forelock.\*

\* It is interesting also to observe the impression made upon Albrecht Dürer by the statue of Verrocchio. In his engraving of the Knight,





*Alinari, Florence*

HORSES OF S. MARCO. ANTIQUE BRONZES. VENICE

antique workmanship, and the popular legend ran that it was the surviving fragment of an antique bronze horse which formerly stood before the Cathedral, said to have been magically cast by Virgil, and which, owing to the superstitious veneration with which it was regarded by the people, was melted down by the Archbishop in 1322, and converted into a bell for the palace chapel. The statement (unsupported by any evidence) that the head formed part of this statue, was first made as early as 1566 by Giovanni Tarcagnola in his book "*Del sito et lodi de la città di Napoli*." Vasari, in the first edition of his "*Lives of the Painters*" (1550), speaks of it as antique, but in the second edition (1568) he corrects his former statement in the following words: "In the house of the Count of Matalone is a head of a horse by the hand of Donato, so beautiful that many believe it to be antique."\* Vasari, as is so often the case, seems to have copied the words of the Anonimo Magliabecchiano, who in his record of the works of Donatello, writes :

"He executed a head and neck of a horse of great size, a very excellent work, which he began intending to complete the rest of the horse, upon which was to have been the figure of the King Alfonso of Aragon, the which is at present in Naples, in the house of the Count of Matalona de Caraffi."†

The entire horse was much larger than those on the Church of S. Mark. The head seen isolated and near allows one more clearly to realise and admire its character and strength. The splendid brows, the snorting nostrils, the alert ears, the stiff mane—a strong, impetuous, powerful creature!" (*Italienische Reise*, March 7, 1787.)

\* Vasari, ii. 409.

† C. de Fabriczy. "*Il Codice dell' Anonimo Gaddiano*." *Arch. Stor. Ital.* 1893, p. 55.

That the head was held by the Maddaloni family as late as the sixteenth century to be the work of Donatello is proved by the entry in an Inventory of the works of art contained in the Palazzo in Via Sedile di Nido, made in 1582: "Un cavallo di bronzo opera del Donatello"; though curiously enough it is entered by Schrader in the very same year, in his catalogue of the collection, among the antiques: "Testa di un cavallo di bronzo colossale."\* On its presentation by Don Francesco Carafa to the Museum in 1809, it was accepted by the director as an antique, and so reliable an authority as Winckelmann asserted it to be of Greek workmanship, "erroneously attributed by Vasari to the Florentine sculptor Donatello." In our own day, though there are still several critics who believe it to be antique, the majority agree that it is, if not the work of Donatello, at least without doubt of the Quattrocento.†

The head was originally in the possession of Lorenzo dei Medici, and was presented by him in 1471 to Diomede Carafa, Count of Maddaloni, a passionate lover of art, who owned a large collection of antique sculpture. This is known from a letter existing in the Archives of Florence among the private papers of the Medici, in which the Count expresses his thanks for the splendid gift and his pleasure at its beauty, and states that he had given it such a position in his house that it could be viewed from

\* "Monumentorum Italiae quae hoc saeculo" &c. Editi a Laurentio Schradero, Haberstadien, Saxone. Helmaestadii, MDXCII., Lib. ii. 248.

† For a concise account of the work see Count Filangieri di Candida. "La Colossale Testa di Cavallo in Bronzo del Museo di Napoli." ("Arte e Storia," xx. 1901.)

M. Müntz has pointed out, the *bottega* of Verrocchio was chiefly important for teaching the science of the different branches of art practised by him—the study of anatomy, of the arrangement of draperies, of the mixing and use of the new oil medium and the science of colours.\* His influence upon Florentine art in general was enormous, but certainly, with the exception of Leonardo, upon his pupils it seems to have been but superficial, and not one of them appears to have understood the spiritual quality of his work. On Lorenzo di Credi it was purely external, for it was not given to this mediocre artist to comprehend the fundamental qualities underlying his form and treatment—the energy and strength, the largeness and nobility, the independence and desire for truth, which give the smallest detail of his ornament power to stimulate. No two men were ever by temperament more unlike than the energetic and self-reliant Verrocchio and the weak and irresolute Credi.

Lorenzo di Andrea di Oderigo Barducci (for such was his family name) was born in 1459. He entered the *bottega* of Verrocchio at an early age and remained in his employ until the death of his master. At the age of twenty-one he was receiving the modest salary of twelve florins a year, about 600 francs of our money. He was later, however, working independently, and the connection between him and Verrocchio must have assumed the character of an affectionate friendship rather than that of master and pupil. The love borne him by Verrocchio seems indeed to have blinded his eyes to his artistic defects, for had he judged his powers impartially he would not have expressed

\* Müntz. "Une Education d' artiste au XVI<sup>ème</sup> siècle." (*Revue des deux Mondes*, 1887.)

his conviction of Credi's capability of completing the Colleoni statue. No imitator has done more to injure his master's reputation than Lorenzo, for while copying certain of Verrocchio's outward forms, he has entirely effaced in these forms any trace of his energy and distinction. Certain realisms of structure he has exaggerated into unpleasant mannerisms, vulgarising everything he touches with his temperamental feebleness. Feebleness and vulgarity must have been ineradicable in his nature, since a lifetime spent in the society of such men as Leonardo and Verrocchio was not sufficient to eliminate these defects. He was incapable of assimilating anything of their nobility and strength, and remained to the last the same dull portrayer of *bourgeoises* Madonnas, feeble saints, and stunted landscape, the same crude and commonplace colourist. No spark of genius was ever struck from him. It is a strange irony of fate that the most commonplace of the Quattrocento artists should have passed his life in contact with men of such pre-eminent genius as Leonardo and Verrocchio. Yet in spite of his mediocrity Lorenzo had a large following, and exercised a very appreciable influence on Florentine painting. His large-headed fat child, which seems modelled out of dough, his landscape with squat trees, his milky colour and smooth technique, were imitated by many nameless painters, some of whose work has been, as we have seen, attributed to Verrocchio himself. That he had received the education of a goldsmith is probable, though nothing in his work shows the crispness and fineness of form which usually result from such a training. That he was a sculptor as well as a painter we know from the words of Verrocchio himself, though the only sculptured work which can with any degree of certainty be attributed to

The construction of the horse is of special interest. The perfection of its shape and freedom of action prove that Verrocchio was as scientifically acquainted with equine as with human anatomy, and had studied carefully from nature. At the same time certain mannerisms of treatment—the tufted forelock, the wrinkles in the neck, and other peculiarities, show that he was influenced by antique sculpture. That he in no way took the Gattamelata statue by Donatello as his model the differences of construction plainly show; neither does his horse bear any resemblance to those sculptured and painted in Florentine art. The war-horse painted by Paolo Uccello, Andrea del Castagno, and by contemporary masters was copied from the ponderous breed which alone could support the weight of the massive armour then in use. Compared with these, the horse of the Colleoni is lightly built and slender, the steed of the antique quadriga. His model is not far to seek. It is precisely those graceful horses of S. Marco that he has imitated both in build and action (Plate XLIV). In shape, in expression, and in all the details of construction it resembles these, and with the exception that the hind hoof is slightly raised, the position also is identical. A resemblance so complete puts it beyond doubt that he must have studied in Venice before executing his model, and have made on the spot sketches and studies of these antique bronze steeds.†

Death and the Devil, of 1513, he has copied the shape and action of the horse exactly, with the exception that the raised hoof is reversed. The face of the Knight also is obviously inspired by the Colleoni.

† The four bronze steeds of S. Marco are probably of Roman workmanship. They were sent from the Hippodrome, Constantinople, in 1204, by the Doge Dandolo, as part of the Venetian booty. In 1797 they were sent to Paris by Napoleon and placed on the Triumph Arch

Cavalcaselle and Crowe speak of the pen and chalk drawing of one of these horses of S. Marco in the Louvre collection (No. 381), as being probably Verrocchio's original study for the Colleoni statue.\* Fine as is the drawing, however, it lacks the energy and distinction of his work, and seems to be rather a careful copy by some draughtsman of the calibre of Credi than by a great artist. The hind quarters are heavy, and the left leg is faulty in drawing, and the head, so spirited in the original sculpture, is tame and dull.

I have been struck, in studying the Colleoni horse, by the great resemblance the colossal bronze head of a horse in the Naples Museum bears to it, the date and authorship of which have been the subject of so much discussion (Plate XLVI). So great is the resemblance in structure, in expression, and in the half-stylistic, half-realistic treatment, as to leave no doubt in my mind but that it is by Verrocchio, and not as is generally accepted, by Donatello. The question is an important one in the history of his development, since the head is known to have been in existence as early as 1471, thus eight years before the commission for the Venice statue.

The history of the bronze is as follows: It was formerly in the possession of the Counts of Maddaloni and decorated the inner courtyard of their palace in Via Sedile di Nido, Naples.† It was up to recent times supposed to be of

of the Place du Carrousel. They were returned to the Venetians in 1815.

\* Cavalcaselle e Crowe. "Storia della Pittura," vi. 154.

† Goethe thus describes the bronze head, seen by him in 1787: "It stands exactly opposite the gateway in the courtyard, in a niche above a fountain, and amazes one. What must have been the effect of this head formerly when united with the limbs to the complete statue!

every side. There is, however, no mention in the letter as to the authorship or epoch of the sculpture.\*

Considering the frequent errors made by the compilers of the Inventories and the early annotators, especially those of the sixteenth century, when the works of the Quattrocento masters were already neglected, the attribution to Donatello bears little weight, and the authorship of the bronze must be judged by the character of the work itself. It rests between Donatello and Verrocchio, for they were the only Florentine artists of that date who had distinguished themselves in equine sculpture, capable of executing so fine and spirited a work of art. An examination of the details of construction show that it differs as widely from the horse of Donatello in Padua as it resembles closely that of Verrocchio in Venice.

It is the work of a sculptor with a thorough knowledge of the anatomy of the horse, and is treated with a fire and freedom not to be found in the Gattamelata statue.

\* The letter is as follows: "Magnifice domine et fili col<sup>me</sup>. Ho ricevuto la testa del cavallo la S.V. se digniata mandareme, de che ne resto tanto contento quanto de cosa havesse desiderato dono digno come per haverlo da la S.V. Avisandola llo ben locato in la mia casa che se vede da omne canto, certificandove che non solo de V.S. ad me ne starà memoria; ma ad mei fillioli, i quali de continuo haveranno la S.V. in observancia et serannoli obligati extimando l' amore quella ha mostrato in volere comparere con tale dono et ornamento alla dicta casa. Si ho da servire la S.V. son parato et pregola me vollia operare che volintiero sarà da me et de bona vollia servita et racomandami alla S.V.

Data Neapoli XII<sup>o</sup> Julii, 1471.

presto Al Servizio et piacere de V.S.

Lo Conte de Matalono.

[Outside] . . . dono Laurencio . . . de Florencia . . . col<sup>me</sup>.

(Firenze, Arch. di Stato, No, 395, filza 27, Cart. priv. famiglia Medici. Quoted by Prince Gaetano Filangieri. "La Testa di Cavallo in Bronzo." Arch. Stor. Napoletane, 1882, p. 407.)

The head of Donatello's war-horse is of a much heavier build, clumsy and spiritless, and bears signs of inexperience and effort, in marked contrast to the *élan* of the Naples bronze. The nostrils are insignificant in size and placed very low, giving to the head a heavy and somewhat pig-like expression. The ears are much smaller and less expressive, and the bones of the skull less marked and assured. Above all, the arch of the neck, so graceful and sensitive in the Naples bronze and the Colleoni horse, is in the Gattamelata statue clumsy and ill-shaped.\*

With the Venice statue, on the other hand, the Naples bronze has everything in common. Position, size, and inflation of the nostrils are identical. The veins ramify downward from the eyes instead of, as in the Gattamelata horse, upwards from the nose. The alert ears have the same importance and expressiveness. The bones are strongly accentuated, showing a perfect acquaintance with the skull. The tufted forelock, imitated from the antique, so stunted and insignificant in the horse of Donatello, is caught up to the same flame-like point in both statue and head. The wrinkles in the neck are exactly the same in number—nine—whereas in the horse of Donatello they are but seven. This point of resemblance being purely stylistic is of importance, as will presently be seen. Above all, there is in both the Venice statue and the Naples head the same nobility of expression and *élan*—qualities which recall the steeds of the Parthenon sculptures, and which the heavy Flanders war-horse of Donatello lacks completely.

\* Donatello's wooden horse, formerly belonging to the Capodilista family, now in the Palazzo della Ragione, Padua, is more spirited than the bronze horse of the Gattamelata, but there is a vast difference between the construction of the head and that of the Naples bronze.





*Alinari, Florence*

BRONZE HEAD OF HORSE. ANTIQUE. MUSEO ARCHEOLOGICO, FLORENCE

One sole difference between the Naples head and the Venice statue is perceptible—the treatment of the mane—which in the latter is luxuriantly curled in the manner peculiar to Verrocchio in his arrangement of human hair, and in the former is hogged and stiffly indicated. In this and in this alone is there any resemblance between the Naples head and the horse of Donatello. This stiff and stylistic treatment of the mane is in both cases imitated from the antique, and we have now to see what antique sculpture existed in Florence which may have served the two Masters as model.

It is generally asserted that in the construction of his horse Donatello imitated the equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius in Rome, but if the two be compared scarcely one point of resemblance is to be found. The head in particular differs essentially. In the Roman bronze the shape of the nose and mouth is completely different, and the mane is clustered in waving masses over the arch of the neck. It is evident that Donatello in designing his horse had thought as little as Verrocchio of the Roman statue.

In the Museo Archeologico, Florence, among the Greek and Roman bronzes is a colossal bronze head of a horse, once gilded, the fragment of some antique statue (Plate XLVII). The head has been broken off at the neck, and is now fixed to a base in the shape of an ornamental collar, which is plainly the work of the seventeenth century. The bronze originally formed part of the Medici collection, and was, during the lifetime of Lorenzo, in the garden of the Palace in Via Larga. It is mentioned among the works of art seized by the Signoria for the decoration of the Palazzo Vecchio, at the confiscation of the Medici possessions in 1495. The entry is as follows: “1495. 14 octobre.

Delib<sup>t</sup> quod omnes teste marmoree seu eree existentes in domo olim Laurentii Pieri de Medicis consignentur operariis palatii flor. pro sala nova dicti palatii . . .

"Una testa di bronzo di cavallo che era nell' orto." \*

It seems to have been later, like so many of the confiscated goods, returned to the Palazzo Medici, for it is entered in the Journal of the Museum, to which it passed in 1815, as having been removed from the second courtyard of the Palace, at that time the Palazzo Riccardi. †

In construction this antique head bears the strongest resemblance to the Gattamelata statue. The nostrils are placed as low, the veins are in the same position, and the hogged mane is treated in precisely the same stiff manner. It is evident that it has served Donatello as a model. It is still more evident that the Naples head was executed in imitation of the bronze, and by an artist better acquainted with equine anatomy either than the Greek sculptor or Donatello, an artist whose studies from nature

\* Müntz. "Les Collections des Médicis au XVI<sup>ème</sup> siècle." Professor Milani, Director of the Museo Archeologico, Florence, has kindly authorised me to publish the following words written by him in answer to my question as to whether the bronze might, without hesitation, be identified with that mentioned in the list of confiscated goods: "Firenze, 4 Giugno, 1904. . . . Credo che la testa di cavallo in parola debba identificarsi con quella che troviamo mentovata fra gli oggetti antichi confiscati dalla Signoria di Firenze ai Medici il 14 ottobre, 1495, e che si dichiarava sita nell' orto della casa medicea.

"La congettura da lei fatta che questa testa abbia servito dunque di modello al Verrocchio e al Donatello mi pare molto bene fondata anche dal punto di visto della sua provenienza medicea. . . ."

† "E passato alle R. Gallerie il bronzo che esisteva ad uso di Fonta (*sic*) nel secondo cortile del palazzo Riccardi esprimente una testa di cavallo alta nel più B. 108." (Giornale della R. Galleria, 1784-1825, 13 Feb., 1815, p. 105, a ter o). The Palazzo Medici was acquired by the Riccardi in 1659.

have given him the right, while imitating the antique model, to alter and adapt it to a truer representation of the animal. The Naples head is a glorified copy of the Florence antique, and it seems probable that Lorenzo dei Medici ordered the copy to present to his friend the Count of Maddaloni. The resemblance of the Naples bronze to the Venice statue warrants the hypothesis that Verrocchio, and not Donatello, was the artist commissioned to copy it. Verrocchio then, whose studies from life had taught him the faults of construction in the original, imitated just so much as he pleased and as the antique style required, keeping to the general lines and treatment, but correcting the details with the assurance of the student of nature. The conception, the pose, the tufted forelock, the stiff hogged mane, the nine stylistic wrinkles of the neck, are faithfully reproduced, but the Naples head shows a better understanding of the anatomy, and beside its fire and energy the Florence antique seems tame and lifeless.

The copy was, as has been seen, in existence in 1471, at which date it was presented by Lorenzo to the Count of Maddaloni. It was thus executed at least eight years before the commission for the Colleoni Statue. The choice of the Venice Signoria of a stranger to compete in so important a work argues some renown already acquired as a sculptor of horses. That Verrocchio had made a special study of their anatomy—a study, judging by the crudeness of most of the representations, rare among the earlier Quattrocento artists—has already been stated with reference to the drawings and model mentioned by Vasari as being in his possession. The bronze head was well known to the Florentines, as the mention of it by the Anonimo and by Vasari proves. It was considered the gem of the

Count of Maddaloni's rich collection, and was given the most important position in his palace. It is evident that it enjoyed the same wide-spread popularity which attended most of Verrocchio's works of this date. It seems more than probable, therefore, that it was the fame of this very sculpture which procured for him the commission for the Colleoni Statue, to which it bears so striking a resemblance.

## CHAPTER XV

### THE SKETCH-BOOK—PUPILS AND ASSISTANTS

THE fame of Verrocchio as a sculptor has suffered much from the attribution to him of the inferior work of the Tornabuoni Relief, which there is every reason to believe is the work of his follower Francesco di Simone. As a draughtsman he has been equally misjudged by the inexplicable acceptance as his work of the so-called "Verrocchio Sketch-Book," a series of drawings by the same feeble artist.\*

The Sketch-Book consists of twenty-five sheets covered, for the most part on both sides, with pen-sketches. The size of the sheets varies owing to the cutting of the margins. They are dispersed in different collections as follows. The Louvre possesses eleven, the Ecole des Beaux Arts one, the Musée Condé, Chantilly, eight, the British Museum two, the Museums of Berlin, of Hamburg and of Dijon one each. The drawings are for the most part feeble and varied imitations of well-known Florentine sculpture and painting, and on nearly all are writings in

\* Notwithstanding the feebleness of the work, these sheets are of the utmost interest as reproducing well-known and popular paintings and sculptures of the time, and would well bear minute and careful analysis.

the same hand, jottings of accounts, notes, memoranda, &c. On one of the sheets is a vulgarised copy of Verrocchio's David in the nude, on another Pollaiuolo's Hercules slaying the Hydra—(the figure very badly drawn and lacking in energy),—on a third the flying angels from Rossellino's Tomb of the Cardinal of Portugal. There are several studies of Madonnas and many of *putti*, the latter treated in the mannered style already noticed in the school imitations of Verrocchio, with exaggerated rolls of loose fat and huge pillow-like legs, such as occur so often in the work of the late Robbia *atelier*. The drawing is coarse in line, irresolute and weak, and offers the strongest contrast to the crisp decisive touch of Verrocchio. A complete ignorance of anatomy is betrayed; the draperies are invariably ill-arranged, the expression of the faces is mostly grotesque, and the entire series is unredeemed by a single touch of beauty or energy. Yet, incredible though it seems, these drawings have been (and still are by a few critics) accepted as the original studies of Verrocchio, the most scientific sculptor and draughtsman of the fifteenth century.

It was, I believe, Morelli who first pointed out the incongruity of the attribution, and having himself discovered in the dépôt of the Louvre the sheet of genuine and beautiful pen-drawings which have been already mentioned in connection with Verrocchio's *Putto* of the Palazzo Vecchio,\* presented it as a standard by which to judge his powers as a draughtsman. The pen-drawings of the Sketch-Book he justly condemned as the work of a feeble artist, between whose style and that of Verrocchio

\* See p. 71.

even an unpractised eye must detect the immense difference.\*

Besides the evidence of the work itself, other proofs of the impossibility of Verrocchio's authorship exist in the notes jotted here and there among the drawings. One of these makes mention of the artist's son Francesco, and on another is a record of "Andrea dell Verocho" himself, whose drawing of some *putti* had been lent to the artist by a certain "Lorenzo dipintore" presumably Lorenzo di Credi.† The notes are all in the same handwriting, which bears the strongest resemblance to that of Francesco di Simone, whose flaccid workmanship the drawings also resemble. The exhaustive analysis of Dr. Georg Gronau has proved beyond doubt that the Sketch-Book is the work of this imitative assistant of Verrocchio.‡

Francesco di Simone Ferucci, of whom much has already been said in reference to the Tornabuoni Relief, was born towards 1440 and was therefore but little younger than his master Verrocchio. He came of a well-known family of sculptors and stone-workers. His father Simone had a large *bottega* at Fiesole, in which Francesco, his brothers

\* Morelli, "Italian Painting," ii. 271.

† The note jotted on the sheet is the memorandum of a debt due to one "Giovani Chartolaio per dua bambini lungi un bracio chome quello che e di mano di andrea dell verocho il quale prestò lorenzo dipintore sopradeto istetta il quale me ne fece servigio."

The evidence adduced by Morelli that one of the drawings is dated 1489, and therefore Verrocchio, dying in 1488, could not be the artist, is based on a mistaken reading of the note, the figure referring not to a date but to a debt. The note is as follows: "Giovani de Tadeo dare per marmi ae anti da noi nicholo muratore per chonto fatto cholui proprio resta a dare intuto lire 1489 a lui diche pargata ae bancho de zanchini a bologna."

‡ Gronau, "Das sogenannte Skizzenbuch der Verrocchio." (Königl. Preuss. Kunstsammlungen, 1896, Heft I.)

Bernardo and Taddeo, and his cousin Piero were all employed. Little is known of Francesco's personal history, but enough of his work can be identified to allow a clear judgment as to his artistic merits. He seems to have been endowed by nature with a special faculty for imitation, and it must be allowed that he patched together the most heterogeneous designs with a certain cleverness. Nothing original ever issued from his brain. He would take the general idea of a monument from one artist and fill in the details from half a dozen different sculptors, blending the whole by his own flaccid style into a certain congruity of effect. He imitated the works that had gained most popularity with the Florentine public, chiefly those of Desiderio, of Rossellino, and of Verrocchio. Of his most important and only signed work—the Tomb of Alessandro Tartagni in the Church of S. Domenico, Bologna, executed in 1477—enough has already been said in speaking of the Tornabuoni Relief. There he took his design from Desiderio his figure from Il Vecchietta, his detail from Verrocchio. In other works he imitated the feeble forms of Filippino Lippi with whom temperamentally he seems to have had most in common, if indeed any temperament can be attributed to so imitative a worker. But notwithstanding, or perhaps even because of, this imitative faculty, he attained great popularity, and was employed in many important works in Florence, and in the surrounding convents and churches. He was one of the artists chosen to judge the designs for the proposed *façade* of the Duomo, and to give his advice when the lantern of the cupola was destroyed by lightning. He was employed on several important monuments at Bologna besides the Tartagni Tomb, and worked also at Forlì and (if recent criticism be correct) in the Tempio o

Rimini also. In 1469 he carved the Tomb of Saracino Pucci in the Church of the SS. Annunziata, Florence; in 1485 he was working at the *façade* of the Prato Cathedral; and in 1487 he executed a marble *ciborio* for the same Church.\* His relations with Verrocchio must have been rather those of assistant and technical helper than pupil. During his lifetime he was working independently, and he seems to have been also employed by the Robbias, in whose *atelier*-work his style is frequently visible. He died in 1493, leaving three sons, all of whom followed the same calling.

Of the works attributed to him besides those already mentioned, the most important are the Tomb of Vianesio Albergati in the Certosa, and that of Barbera Manfredi in the Church of S. Biagio, Bologna; two monuments—those of Gian Francesco Oliva and of Marsabilia Trinci, in the Exconvento of Montefiorentino; and in the Tempio of Rimini the sculptures of the Tomb of Sigismondo Malatesta. In the Palazzo Cavriani, Mantua, is a characteristic work, a marble *ciborio*, with a fat-limbed Christ Child above and a Tobias and the Archangel below.†

With less reason, as it seems to me, is the beautiful Lavabô in the Sacristy of the Badia of Fiesole attributed to him. That he was employed in work for the Badia is known,‡ and it is possible that he is responsible for the square and commonplace Lavabô of the Refectory, but that so mediocre an artist was capable of designing the graceful and original fountain of the Sacristy is not admissible.

\* See note of Milanesi. Vasari, iii. 371, note 2.

† See the article by Venturi on Francesco di Simone. ("Arch. Stor. dell' Arte," v., 1892, p. 371.)

‡ In 1463 he was employed to carve a Crucifix for the Convent.

The style is purely Donatellesque, the proportions are exquisite, and the workmanship of a different and much superior quality to anything known of Francesco di Simone. The Sketch-Book is characteristic of his imitative methods of work. It is a series of extracts from other men's painting and sculpture, with hardly a figure or design which cannot be identified as a copy, and it is probable that like his sculptures, there is not an original or personal touch in the whole of the existing twenty-five sheets.

The *bottega* of Verrocchio shared with that of Antonio Pollaiuolo the reputation of being the most important training-school in Florence. Vasari speaks of the number of his pupils, and we know that artists of the importance of Leonardo and Perugino owed their education to him. Of the influence of Verrocchio on Leonardo enough has already been said in the course of this study. Of his influence on Perugino there are unmistakable signs in the earlier works of the Umbrian painter, particularly in the fresco of the "Delivery of the Keys" in the Cappella Sistina, painted in 1482, the period of Verrocchio's greatest popularity. Here we find, not only the features of the Christ of Or S. Michele imitated, but in the S. John the Evangelist, standing to the right of S. Peter, the entire figure of S. Thomas is reproduced with little variation, proving the impression made upon Perugino of the work, which was at that date still in Verrocchio's *bottega*. The peculiar crumpled folds of Perugino's draperies are also evidently adopted from those of Verrocchio, although they have little really in common with his natural and structural, if somewhat redundant, draperies. Perugino was too little scientific in his aims to gain much fundamentally from the school of which Verrocchio was the chief. As

him is the original part of the Forteguerri Monument, which shows all the qualities of his painting, without the technical facility for which credit must be allowed him in his use of the brush.

Of his human virtues and of his fidelity and devotion to Verrocchio we have already spoken in the biographical chapter. He fell under the blighting influence of Savonarola, and having amassed by his work a sufficient sum of money, he renounced the world and entered the brotherhood of S. Maria Nuova, where he lived tranquilly until his death in 1537.

It may be possible some day to identify, among the mediocre sculptures showing the influence of Verrocchio, the work of other pupils, whose names are known to us chiefly through the record of Vasari. Of one of these, Agnolo di Polo, he tells us that he had filled Florence with his productions. "He worked in clay with much ability, and if he had chosen to use his intelligence he would have done most beautiful things."\* This artist, born in 1470, was brother to Domenico di Polo, engraver of gems and medallist. The only work known with certainty to be by his hand is the painted terra-cotta bust of Christ, executed for the Sala della Sapienza, of the Municipio, Pistoia, now in the Liceo Forteguerri. It is a poor production showing only superficially the influence of Verrocchio. By analogy with this work many of the terra-cottas attributed in different Museums to Verrocchio himself may well be by Agnolo di Polo, and his hand is certainly perceptible in many altar-pieces of the Robbia *fabbrica*, in that of S. Medardo, Arcevia, for example, and

\* Vasari, iii. 371.

in the Nativity of Città di Castello, and many others executed under the direction of Giovanni.

Nanni Grosso is another pupil mentioned by Vasari, though his work is unknown to us. Another artist of the same name, Niccolò Grosso, nicknamed Caparra, shows in his metal work strong traces of Verrocchio's influence. The iron torch-sconces on the walls of the Palazzo Strozzi, wrought in the likeness of spinous-winged griffins have a great resemblance to the griffins of Verrocchio, and are treated with much of his energy and sharpness.

To the immense influence exercised by Verrocchio upon the Robbia *fabbrica*, the whole mass of work of the late school testifies. Entire scenes, such as the group of Or S. Michele and the Baptism were copied by them, the latter scene in each of the hexagonal glazed fonts, as well as in several predella reliefs. Andrea Della Robbia himself was much influenced by him, and forsook the classic simplicity of Luca for the more modern style of Verrocchio, imitating his elaborate arrangement of draperies and his luxuriant grape-like curls. The school under Giovanni became entirely Verrocchiesque. Construction of face and form, draperies, composition, all were copied from his works or from the exaggerated imitations of his pupils. The type of face of the Christ of Or S. Michele, with the hair carefully parted and flattened on the temples, and the forked beard, was adopted by the school for their Christs and Baptists. The influence continued to increase until the decay of the industry, and in one of the latest works—the frieze of the Ospedale del Ceppo, Pistoia—the better sculptures, executed probably by Girolamo, the last of the dynasty of ceramic artists, are the most satisfactory imitations of the style of Verrocchio that exist. No

stronger proof of his popularity with the Florentines can be adduced than this prolonged imitation of his style by the Robbia *fabbrica*, which in its later development devoted itself entirely to supplying the popular demands, and copying all that had hit the public taste. Through their means and the prolific imitators of Credi, Florence was, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, inundated with sculptures and paintings in an exaggerated Verrocchiesque style.

Of the unknown imitator who executed the series of Madonnas with the bent thumb, and of the artist (Francesco Botticini?) who painted the beautiful Journey of Tobias in the Accademia, Florence, mention has already been made in the chapter on Verrocchio's Madonna. The latter work is certainly the most important painting which shows his direct influence, and so well has the painter succeeded in catching his spirit, that were the head of the Archangel Gabriel, for example, isolated from the rest of the picture, it might well pass for the work of Verrocchio himself of the same date as the Angels of the Baptism.

## CHAPTER XVI

### LOST AND ATTRIBUTED WORKS

IN the course of this study mention has been made incidentally of several works—no longer in existence, or, at least, hitherto undiscovered—executed by Verrocchio for the Medici, the authenticity of which is supported by the reliable evidence of Tommaso's Inventory. These missing works may be briefly recapitulated.

1. The restored antique statue of Marsyas, in purple marble, "lo gnudo rosso" (see p. 94).

2. Three bronze heads which formed part of the fountain of Careggi, of which the Putto with the Dolphin was the centre (p. 69).

3. A relief carved with several figures, material and subject not specified.

4. A panel picture representing the head of Lucrezia dei Donati.

- 5 and 6. Standards painted for the Jousts of Lorenzo and Giuliano dei Medici (p. 82).

7. A metal figure of a lady for the crest of a helmet.

8. Twenty masks, probably portraits executed from death-masks.

9. Decorative work, presumably armour, for the Duke Galeazzo Sforza.

10. A fountain figure of marble—"una figura di marmo che gietta acqua"—probably executed for one of the Medici Villas.

Of the works mentioned by Vasari, no longer in existence, or of which no trace has yet been discovered, we have the following list:

Clasps for ecclesiastical vestments, executed for S. Maria del Fiore (see p. 42).

Two vases or cups wrought in metal, one with animals, foliage and other ornaments, the other with dancing *putti* (p. 42).

A marble relief of the Madonna and Child, formerly in the Palazzo Medici, later over the door of the room of the Duchess Eleonora of Toledo, in the Palazzo Vecchio (p. 116).

Two reliefs of metal representing—one the head of Alexander the Great in profile, the other of Darius, sent by Lorenzo dei Medici to the King Mathias Corvinus of Hungary (p. 91).

Drawings of two horses, with proportional measurements for enlarging, and a terra-cotta relief of a horse's head copied from the antique in the possession of Vasari (p. 180).

A monument to a Doge in Venice, the design for which was in the possession of Don Vincenzio Borghini.

The head of a lady very finely painted on paper.

A panel painted for the nuns of S. Domenico, Via del Maglio, Florence, the subject of which is not mentioned.

A Crucifix carved in wood.

A terra-cotta head of S. Girolamo.

A *putto* for the clock of the Mercato Nuovo, with a mechanical arm which struck the hours with a hammer, considered, Vasari tells us, "very beautiful and ingenious."

Lastly, he mentions a cartoon of a "Battle of Nudes," drawn with a pen as a study for the decoration in colour of some *facciata*. It has been suggested that this drawing was a sketch for one of the three large canvases which decorated the Sala del Consiglio of the Palazzo Vecchio, representing labours of Hercules, a record of which is given by Albertini in the following words:

"IN PALAZO MAIORE.

"Nella sala del consiglio antiquo è la tavola di Philip (Fra Filippo or Filippino?) e li tre quadri, di Hercole in tela del Verrocchio."\*

It is however almost certain that Albertini was mistaken in attributing these paintings to Verrocchio, and that they may be identified with the three large pictures painted by Antonio Pollaiuolo for Lorenzo dei Medici, and minutely described by Vasari in his life of that painter. These paintings are mentioned in the Inventory, made after the death of Lorenzo in 1492, as being in the large hall of the Palazzo in Via Larga. They were confiscated by the Signoria in 1495, at which time they were hung where Albertini saw them in the Sala del Consiglio.

Whether the marble fountain already mentioned (p. 36) as commissioned to Verrocchio by Mathias Corvinus, King of Hungary, which was to be erected in Florence as a token of his friendship, was ever begun, we have no record. All that is known of it is that, on August 27, 1488, Bertoccio di Giorgio di Pellegrino, stone-worker of Carrara, claimed payment from Alessandro, the king's agent in Florence, for marble furnished for a fountain, which was to be executed by Andrea del Verrocchio.† It is most likely

\* Albertini. *Memoriale*. Firenze, 1510.

† See Milanesi's note. Vasari, iii. 361, note 3.

that the fountain was never begun, but deferred on account of the commission for the Colleoni statue.

The authenticity of the silver statues of Apostles, stated by Vasari to have been executed by Verrocchio for the altar in the private chapel of Sixtus IV. in the Vatican, is more than doubtful, since there is no record in the carefully-kept account-books of the Pope's expenses of Verrocchio's name. That statues of gilded silver actually existed, we have the record of Albertini to prove,\* and these, Milanese, quoting Bottari, informs us were stolen towards the middle of the last century. Dr. Semper believes Vasari's statement as to Verrocchio's authorship to be true. He speaks of certain marble reliefs built into the wall of the vaults beneath S. Peter's, which he says show strong traces of his influence. These reliefs originally decorated the altar of the Sistine Chapel, the same altar for which the silver Apostles were executed, and he claims that they were carved by Verrocchio's assistants under his direction, as part of a general scheme of decoration undertaken by him at the Pope's commission.† Albertini mentions these reliefs as being by Matteo, brother of Simone Pollaiuolo.

Of two important works in bronze we have documentary record, a bell executed for the Vallombrosan Convent of Monte Scalari, and candelabra for the Signoria to decorate the hall of audience in the Palazzo Vecchio. For these last, two documents of payment exist—one of September 23rd, 1469, recording the payment of 40 florins for a

\* "Quid dicam de XII Apostolis argenteis deauratis a tua beatitudine largitis?" Albertini. *Opusculum de mirabilibus novae urbis Romæ.*

† Semper. *Andrea del Verrocchio.* (Dohme's *Kunst und Künstler*) Leipzig, 1878.

candelabrum “wrought and carved in the likeness of a certain vase;” the other, dated April 20th, 1480, recording the payment of three broad florins, for bronze candelabra which were in the Chapel of the Hall of Council (Doc. viii).

The large bronze candelabrum in the Bargello (No. 83), resting on tortoises, and decorated with acanthus-leaves and sphynxes somewhat in the style of Verrocchio, has been wrongly identified with one of these. The work is exceedingly poor, the acanthus-leaves without crispness or energy, and, if further proof were needed, the candelabrum bears on its base the *stemma* of the Parte Guelfa—the eagle subduing the dragon, with the letters S.P.Q.F.—showing that it was executed for their hall, and not for the Palazzo Vecchio.

The history of the bronze bell is known to us. It was cast in October 1474, and was decorated with figures and ornaments in low relief. At the suppression of the convent of Monte Scalari in 1775, it was brought by the Priore of S. Pancrazio in Val d’Arno Superiore, and in 1815 it was broken up and recast.\*

Cinelli, writing in 1677, speaks of works by Verrocchio existing in the church of S. Pancrazio, Florence, now desecrated and used as a tobacco factory.

In the Chapel of the Attavanti [he writes] is a dead Christ in the lap of his mother, with S. Giovanni and the Maries around, and at either end are S. Giovanni Gualberto and S. Verdiana, all the figures of terra-cotta, little less than life-size, by the hand of Andrea Verrocchio. In the arch of

\* Ripetti. “Dizionario Geografico-fisico-storico della Toscana.” Firenze, 1833, p. 19.

the said chapel is a Virgin when she is annunciated by the angel, of glazed clay, by the hand of the said Verrocchio.\*

The description recalls one of the painted terra-cotta Pietà of the late Robbia *fabbrica*, such as exist in the Berlin Museum and in the Church of S. Salvatore al Monte, near Florence, and it seems probable that Cinelli has made a mistake in attributing either this Pietà, or the glazed Annunciation to Verrocchio.

It would be equally useless and wearisome to enumerate all of the many works bearing signs of the influence of Verrocchio, which are attributed to him in museums and private collections. Some of these have been already mentioned. A few—the Forteguerri model of S. Kensington and the Decollation of the Baptist, claimed by Dr. Ulmann as the original study for the Silver Relief—are modern forgeries. In this class must also be included the exceedingly modern-looking terra-cotta statuette representing S. Jerome reading, No. 7578 of the Victoria and Albert Museum, bought from the dubious Gigli-Campana collection, and officially attributed to the Florentine school of the sixteenth century. The attitude of the figure, seated in a free and easy manner with one leg cocked high over the other, the torso twisted away from the legs, and the face turned in the opposite direction, is mannered and vulgar,

\* “ Chiesa di S. Pancrazio tenuto da’ Monaci dell’ Ordine di Vall’ Ombrosa : . . . Cappella degli Attavanti ; è in questa uno Christo morto in grembo alla Madre intorno sono S. Gio : e le Marie, nell’ estremità vi è S. Gio. Gualberto e S. Verdiana figure tutte di terra cotta poco minori del naturale di mano di Andrea Verrocchio. Nell’ arco della detta Cappella vi è una Vergine quando è annunziata dall’ angelo di terra vetriata di mano del medesimo Verrocchio.” Giovanni Cinelli. “ Le Bellezze della Città di Firenze.” Firenze, 1677, p. 203.

and completely out of character with the work of the fifteenth century. It does not even seem to have been executed in imitation of Verrocchio, and nothing but the crumpled folds of the draperies bears the least resemblance to his style.

More attention must be given to an important group of reliefs in bronze recently attributed by several critics to Verrocchio, chief of which is the bronze Altar-piece in the Church of the Carmine, Venice, representing the Deposition. This relief was first brought into notice by Dr. Bode, who has decided it to be a genuine work by Verrocchio of his later period.\* The date of execution is fixed with more or less accuracy by the presence of the portraits of Federigo di Montefeltro, Duke of Urbino, and of his son Guidobaldo, as a child of about three or four years of age. As Guidobaldo was born in 1472, the date of the relief would therefore be about 1475 or 1476.

The relief was formerly attributed, in spite of these portraits, to an unknown artist of the date of Sansovino. Christ is represented lying at the foot of the Cross, supported by the Virgin and another of the holy women. The Magdalen, with both arms upraised towards the empty Cross, shrieks loudly, and another woman behind her is in equally violent and hysterical action. These figures, though of finer workmanship, have affinities with those of the Tornabuoni Relief. To the right, in inharmonious contrast to their exaggerated gestures, is seated S. John, quietly resting his head on his hand, and gazing pensively at the dead Christ. His face is not unlike that of S. Thomas of Or S.

\* Bode. "Una tavola in bronzo di Andrea del Verrocchio nella Chiesa del Carmine in Venezia." (Arch. Stor. dell' Arte., vi., 1893, fasc. ii.)

Michele, yet in spite of this and certain other superficial resemblances testifying to the influence of Verrocchio, the work appears to me to have none of the qualities of his style. The draperies are without the elaboration or beauty of his later manner, the proportion of the figures is bad, for example, the thighs and lower part of the body of Christ and of the Evangelist are far too small for the large head and shoulders, and the work is full of similar faults of which Verrocchio would not, certainly at this date, have been guilty.

In the Museum of the University, Perugia, is a square bronze relief representing the "Flagellation," the architectural background of which, in the same low relief, bears much resemblance to that of the "Discord." This work is by both Dr. Bode and Prof. Venturi attributed to Verrocchio, the latter making the singular error of naming it "The Martyrdom of S. Sebastian."\* The scourging takes place in the middle distance. Christ—an ignominious figure—is bound to the column in the centre, an executioner swinging his rope with a violent gesture on the left, and Herod being seated on the right. The foreground is occupied with figures of the Virgin, the Evangelist, and some sleeping Apostles. The architecture, resembling that of the Paduan reliefs of Donatello, is excellent, and the perspective well indicated, but the modelling of the figures is weak and without the energy of Verrocchio. The work shows strong traces of the influence of Mantegna, and the figure of the soldier leaning on his shield to the right, is obviously imitated from the fresco in the Church of the Eremitani.

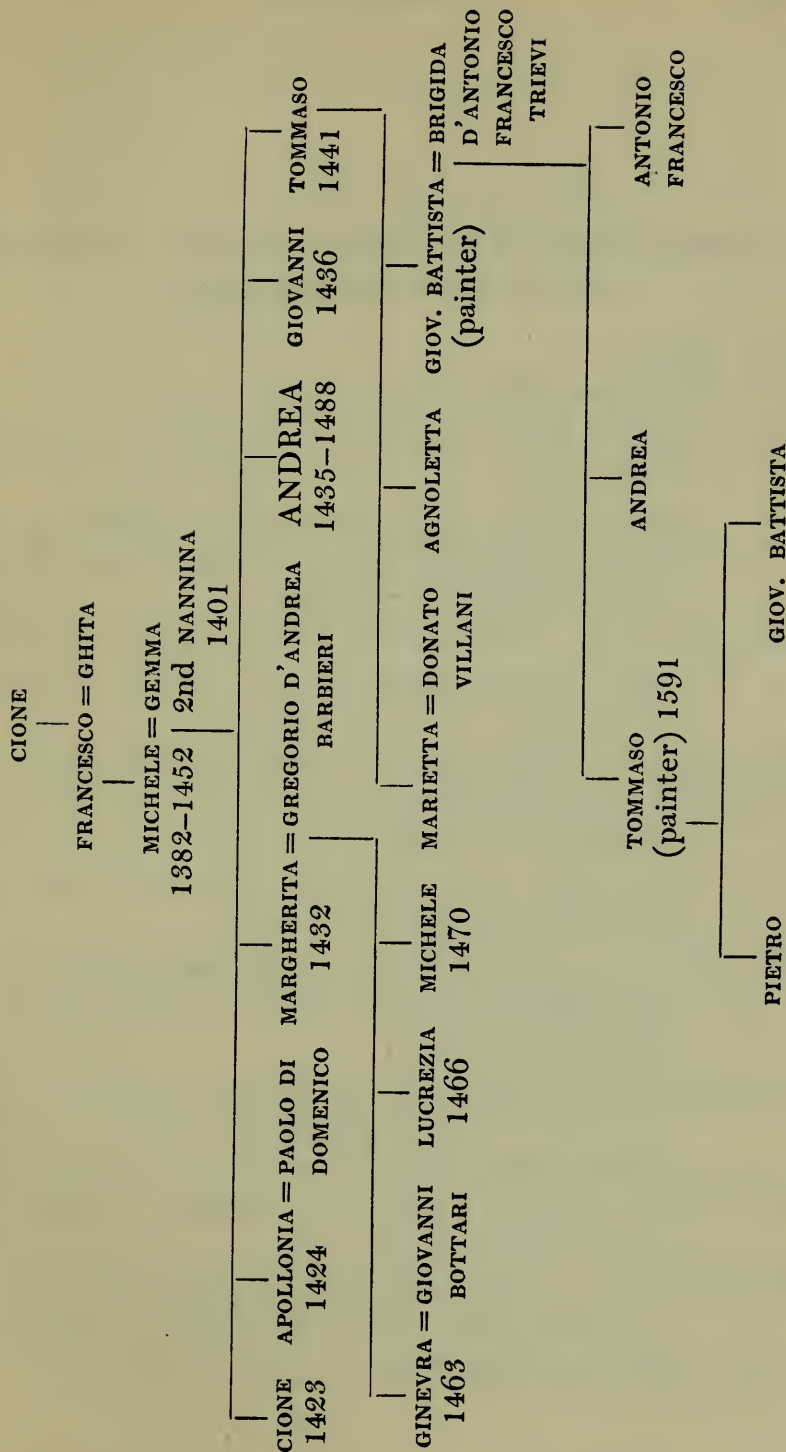
\* Venturi. "Un bronzo del Verrocchio nel Museo dell' Università, Perugia." (*L'Arte*, v., 1902, p. 43.)

Lastly, mention must be made of two terra-cotta works in the Victoria and Albert Museum, S. Kensington, both bought at the Gigli-Campana sale of 1861. One of these, a crucified Christ nailed to a modern Cross (No. 7571), is officially attributed to Verrocchio. The other—a bust of Christ—(No. 7586), is inscribed as of the Florentine school of the fifteenth century. The former seems to me to belong to the large catalogue of forgeries for which the sale is so notorious; while the latter is a fairly good and apparently contemporary imitation of Verrocchio's style rather by the hand of one of the Robbia *atelier* than by any of his own pupils.

# APPENDIX



# I. GENEALOGICAL CHART OF THE FAMILY OF ANDREA DEL VERROCCHIO



## II. CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF THE LIFE AND WORKS OF VERROCCHIO

- 1435. Birth.
- 1452. His father Michele died.
- 1453. Absolved from the charge of the homicide of Antonio di Domenico.
- 1457. First Declaration of Property to the Catasto.
- 1461. Commissioned by the Operai of the Duomo, Orvieto, to make designs for a chapel.
- 1463. March 29. Deliberation of the Università dei Mercatanti to erect a statue of Christ and S. Thomas for the Tabernacle of Or S. Michele.
- 1467. Jan. 5. First payment for Group of Or S. Michele.
- 1467. Jan. 19. Deliberation of the Operai of the Duomo to execute the Palla for the Cupola.
- 1467. Oct. 22. The body of Cosimo il Vecchio placed in Verrocchio's tomb in S. Lorenzo.
- 1467. Nov. 4. Paid for metal lent to Michelozzo and Luca della Robbia for casting the last panels of the bronze doors of the Sacristy.
- 1468 Jan. 19. Another deliberation concerning the Palla, in which Verrocchio, Luca della Robbia, Antonio Pollaiuolo and Lorenzo dei Medici take part.
- 1468. Feb. 7. Joust of Lorenzo dei Medici for which Verrocchio painted the Standard.
- 1468. March 30. The Commissioners of the Group of Or S. Michele bind themselves to pay Verrocchio a monthly sum of 25 lire.

1468. June 29. Payment for a bronze candelabrum executed by Verrocchio for the Sala dell' Audienza. Palazzo Vecchio.
1468. Sept. 10. Commission to Verrocchio to cast the Palla for the Cupola of S. Maria del Fiore.
1468. Dec. 2. Verrocchio, together with Luca della Robbia, Antonio Pollaiuolo, and Banco di Filippo estimates price of Palla.
1469. March 29. Verrocchio cedes part of payment for Palla to Piero dei Medici.
1469. Sept. 23. Second payment for bronze candelabra for Palazzo Vecchio.
1470. Second Declaration of Property to the Catasto.
1471. May 27. Palla of Cupola is placed in position.
1472. Completion of Tomb of Giovanni and Piero dei Medici in S. Lorenzo.
1473. Is called to Prato to estimate the Pulpit of Mino da Fiesole and Rossellino.
1474. Presents model for Forteguerri Monument, Pistoia.
1474. Executes bronze bell for the Convent of Montescalari.
1475. Jan. . Joust of Giuliano dei Medici for which Verrocchio painted the Standard.
1476. May 10. The Bronze David bought by the Signoria from Lorenzo and Giuliano dei Medici for 150 broad florins.
1477. July 24. Commission by the Operai del Duomo for the Relief of the Silver Altar.
1477. Aug. 2. Is paid for two models executed by him for the Silver Altar.
1477. Is commissioned by the Operai del Duomo, Pistoia, to execute the Forteguerri Monument.
1478. March 11. The Operai del Duomo, Pistoia, request the decision of Lorenzo dei Medici as to the merits

- of the rival models of Verrocchio and Piero Pollaiuolo for the Forteguerri Monument.
1479. July 30. Deliberation of the Venice Signoria respecting the statue to Bartolommeo Colleoni.
1480. Last Declaration of Property to the Catasto.
1480. April 20. Last payment for Candelabra for the Palazzo Vecchio.
1480. Completion of the Relief for the Silver Altar and payment.
1481. July 12. The Ferrarese Ambassador at the request of Verrocchio demands a free passage through the States of Ferrara for the model of the horse of the Colleoni statue.
1483. June 21. Collocation of the Group of Christ and S. Thomas in the Tabernacle of Or S. Michele.
1485. Nov. . The Operai del Duomo, Pistoia, decide to pay Verrocchio for the Altar-piece for the Chapel of the Piazza, nearly completed.
1488. June 25. Made his Testament.
1488. Accepts commission to execute a Fountain in Florence to be paid for by Mathias Corvinus, King of Hungary.
1488. Died at Venice.
1488. Oct. 7. Lorenzo di Credi allocates to Giovanni di Andrea di Domenico the task of casting the Colleoni statue.
1495. Nov. 22. The inscription on the Tomb of Cosimo il Vecchio in S. Lorenzo erased by order of the Signoria.
1496. Jan. 27. Tommaso, brother of Verrocchio, presents an inventory of works executed by him for the Medici, to the officials deputed by the rebels to value their goods after their expulsion from Florence.

- 1496. March 21. The Colleoni Statue, cast by Leopardi, is exposed to the public in the Piazza di SS. Giovanni e Paolo, Venice.
- 1511. June 17. Commission to Lorenzo Lotti to finish the Forteguerri Monument begun by Verrocchio.
- 1527. The populace damage the Tomb of Cosimo il Vecchio in S. Lorenzo.
- 1532. The Tomb of Cosimo il Vecchio is restored, and the inscriptions replaced.
- 1600. Jan. 17. Palla of Cupola, executed by Verrocchio, struck by lightning and destroyed.
- 1753. The Forteguerri Monument finished by Gaetano Masoni of Settignano.

### III. LIST OF WORKS BY VERROCCHIO.

#### SCULPTURE.

BERLIN.—MUSEUM. No. 93. SLEEPING YOUTH. Terra-cotta statuette.

No. 97A. ENTOMBMENT. Terra-cotta relief.

FLORENCE.—MUSEO NAZIONALE. DAVID. Bronze statuette. Executed for the Medici. Bought by the Signoria 1476, and placed on the pedestal outside the Sala dell' Orologio in the Palazzo Vecchio. Removed by the Grand Duke Ferdinand I. to make way for his own bust. Removed from the Guardaroba Ducale to the Gallery of the Uffizi, 1777, and later to the Bargello.

BUST OF LADY. Marble. From the Medici Collection.

MADONNA AND CHILD. Terra-cotta relief. The top

part with the Dove added later. From the collection of S. Maria Nuova. Removed 1901 to the Uffizi, and 1903 to the Bargello.

[SALA D'ARMI] HELMET WITH CREST OF DRAGON.(?) Wrought iron.

S. LORENZO. SLAB TOMB OF COSIMO IL VECCHIO. Finished before 1467. Inscribed at the head: COSMVS MEDICES HIC SITVS EST DECRETO PVBLICO PATER PATRIAE At the foot: VIXIT ANNOS LXXV. MENSES III. DIES XX. The present inscription dates from 1532, the original having been destroyed by order of the Signoria in 1495. Damaged in the riots of 1527. Restored 1532.

[SACRISTY.] TOMB OF PIERO AND GIOVANNI DEI MEDICI. Bronze and porphyry. Inscribed on the side facing the Chapel of the Madonna: PETRO ET IOHANNI DE MEDICIS COSMI PP. FF. On the side towards the Sacristy: PET. VIX. AN. LIII. M.V.D. XV. IOHAN. AN. XLII. M. III. D. XXVIII. And round the base: LAVRENTIVS ET IYL. PETRI FF. POSVER PATRI PATRVOQVE MCCCCLXXII.

[CHAPEL OF MADONNA—above Tomb.] SHIELD WITH STEMMA OF MEDICI.

[INNER SACRISTY.] LAVABO. Marble. Executed for Piero dei Medici.

MUSEO DELL' OPERA DEL DUOMO. DECOLLATION OF BAPTIST. Silver relief on right side of the silver altar. Finished 1480.

OR S. MICHELE. CHRIST AND S. THOMAS. Bronze. Finished 1483.

PALAZZO VECCHIO [CORTILE]. PUTTO WITH DOLPHIN. Bronze. And THREE LIONS' HEADS. Marble. From a fountain executed for the Medici Villa, Careggi. Removed to the Palazzo Vecchio between 1550 and 1568. Basin and Pedestal by Tadda.

[LANDING OUTSIDE SALA DEL GIGLIO] PEDESTAL. Por-

phyry and marble. Executed for the DAVID on its removal to the Palazzo Vecchio in 1476.

CAREGGI. VILLA MEDICI. RESURRECTION. Terra-cotta relief painted.

LONDON.—VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM. No. 251. THE GENIUS OF DISCORD. Stucco Relief.

PARIS.—LOUVRE COLL. THIERS. Two ANGELS. Terra-cotta Models for the Angels supporting the Mandorla in the Forteguerra Monument, Pistoia.

COLL. OF M. GUSTAVE DREYFUS. BUST OF MEDEA COLLEONI. Marble.

BUST OF GIULIANO DEI MEDICI. Terra-cotta.

PUTTO ON GLOBE. Terra-cotta.

JUDGMENT OF PARIS. Small bronze plaque.

COLL. OF M. EDMOND FOULC. BUST OF LADY. Terra-cotta.

PISTOIA.—DUOMO. FORTEGUERRI TOMB. Part of design only by Verrocchio. Commissioned 1477. Left unfinished at death. Worked on in 1511 by Lorenzo Lotti. Finished 1753 by Gaetano Masoni. Inscribed: NICOLAO FORTGVERRAE CARDINALI GRATA PATRIA CIVI SVO DE SE OPTIME MERITO POSVIT A. S. MCCCCLXXIII. V. A. LIII.

NAPLES.—MUSEO. HEAD OF HORSE. Bronze. Presented by Lorenzo dei Medici to the Count of Maddaloni 1471. Presented to the Museum by Don Francesco Carafa, 1809.

VENICE.—PIAZZA DI SS. GIOVANNI E PAOLO. EQUESTRIAN STATUE OF BARTOLOMMEO COLLEONI. Bronze. Finished in clay 1488. Cast by Leopardi, and exposed to the public 1496.

## PAINTINGS.

FLORENCE.—ACCADEMIA. THE BAPTISM. Tempera and oil on panel. Executed for the Convent of S. Salvi. At the suppression of the Convent removed to S. Verdiana, and later to the Accademia.

UFFIZI. THE ANNUNCIATION. Oil on panel. Attributed to Leonardo. Painted for the Convent of Monte Oliveto, Florence. Badly repainted.

VIENNA.—COLLECTION OF PRINCE LICHTENSTEIN. PORTRAIT OF LADY. Oil on Panel. The panel has been much shortened. On the back is painted a design of bay leaves, juniper and palm enclosing a scroll inscribed VIRTUTEM FORMA DECORAT.

## DRAWINGS.

FLORENCE.—UFFIZI. [CORNICI 47, No. 130.] HEAD OF ANGEL. Black chalk. Gone over later with ink. Pricked for transfer, but by a later hand. Study for the Angel in the Baptism.

[CORNICI 48, No. 212.] VENUS AND CUPID. Silver-point.

LONDON.—BRITISH MUSEUM. MALCOLM COLL. [1895—9—15—785]. HEAD OF LADY. Black chalk on white paper. Life-size.

Reverse: HEAD OF LADY. Black chalk.

PARIS.—LOUVRE. SHEET OF DRAWINGS WITH PUTTI. Five on one side, four on the other. Pen and sepia. The inscription is not in Verrocchio's handwriting.

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## V. DOCUMENTS

## I

[The following three documents were transcribed and published by the author for the first time in *L'Arte*, April 1904. Milanesi, in the *Prospetto Cronologico* to the Life of Verrocchio by Vasari, mentions the Portata to the Catasto of 1457 and was not ignorant of the existence of that of 1480. He gave no indication, however, under which of the four Gonfaloni of the Quarter of S. Croce the documents were to be found, and if I am not mistaken he did not know of the existence of that of 1470.]

## PORTATA AL CATASTO DEL 1457.

## GONFALONE RUOTE.

4. SANTA +

6. RUOTE.

Andrea di michele di francescho cioni e maso suo fratello disse el prmo chatasto in michele di francescho e mona ghita sua madre:

ebbe di chatasto	.	.	.	f. — s. 10d. —
ho di valsente	.	.	.	f. 2s. 12d. 4
ho di cinquina	.	.	.	f. — s. 8d. 4

*Sustanze.*

Una chasa p mio abitare posta nel popolo di santo ambruogio e nella via dellagnuolo che da p<sup>o</sup> via 2<sup>o</sup> pagholo di domenicho lanino 3<sup>o</sup> la chonpagnia del tenpio e 4<sup>o</sup> matteo del granaccio la qual chasa portò michele nel prmo chatasto.

Una chasa nel chastello di certaldo in via malachoda laquale s'appartiene amme andrea avvita p testamento di tommaso di simone da certaldo alla quale da prmo via assichondo via a

3° antonio benizi a 4° giovanni ammirati assene di pigione l. 6 lanno.

Uno pezzo di terra posto nel chomune di certaldo e nel popolo di santo ipolito a vologniano luogho detto lavanella di staiora 10 che da p° via 2° S. bartolomeo berti a 3° guido bonciani a 4 el fiume delsa el quale lavora ghorò di chechone assene di rendita lanno istaia 5 di grano.

Uno pezzo di terra indetto chomune luogho detto elpoggio che da primo via 2° istefano di binci 3° meo barbieri e 4° istoldo de Rossi el quale lavora bastiano del biondo assene di fitto lanno lire 8 cioe l. 8.

Uno pezzo di terra in detto chomune lugho detto lastrada che da p° via 2° bartolo dantonio oste a 3° pieraccino di pippo a 4° nicholaio di S. filippo el quale lavora bartolo dantonio oste assene lanno istaia 6 di grano lanno.

*Beni alienati.*

E piu ebbe una chasa posta nel detto chastello luogho detto el borgho cho sua chonfini laqual chasa vendè allazzero dal fornaino p f. 43 feciene el merchato S. baldassare di bartolomeo di deo da certaldo f. 45.

le sopra dette chose gli vennono nelle mani al sopra detto michele p testamento prima di tommaso di simone da certaldo e dipoi lebbe p testamento di mona lorenza dona del sopra detto tommaso la quale morì nel mille quatrocento quaranta carta fatta p mano di S. bindello di dore notaro lequali non furono portate nel primo chatasto pche e sopra deti nominati non sopportavano gravezza.

E piu ebbe il sopra detto michele della detta redita una chasa posta nel popolo di sannicholo q. santo spirito G. della ischala che da primo via 2° antonio bastiere el 3° labate di ripoli 4° via laqual chasa dette p dota alla tita sua figliuola emoglie di ghirighoro dandrea barbiere per f. 60 funne el chontratto S. andrea.

E piu chonperò una chasa posta nel popolo di santo ambruogio che da p<sup>o</sup> via 2<sup>o</sup> nanni di pagholetto e da 3<sup>o</sup> il detto michele e da [sic] la qual chasa chonperò nel 1432 dalla chonpagnia deltenpio p f. 53 la qual chasa dette in dota alla appollonia sua figliuola emoglie di pagholo p f. 53 funne mezano S. pagholo pagholi.

*Boche.*

Io andrea danni 21 — f. 200.

Mona nonnina mia matrignia dani 56 — f. 200.

Io maso danni 16 — f. 200.

*debiti.*

A martino di mugnione biadaiuolo a aver l. 47.

A iachopo di maffio aver l. 24.

A antonio mugniaio a avere f. 53.

*Danari a reschuotere.*

O avere da nicholaio di S. filippo da vicho l. 24 O avere dapparechi qualche altrettanti danari sono povere persone e da nonavere mai nulla Truovomi delletà vedete e chon pocho essercizio chessoievo istare allorafo e perche larte non lavora nonvi isto piu.

el detto mio fratello ista chonromolo ciechi assalaro e non guardagniamo le chalzi.

(Arch. di Stato di Firenze S. 1457, C. 810. Gonfalone Ruote, a c. 592).

II

PORTATA AL CATASTO DEL 1470.

QUARTIERE S +

GONFALONE RUOTE.

Andrea di michele di francescho scharpellatore disse nel p<sup>mo</sup> chatasto in michele di francescho e mona ghita sua madre.

G<sup>e</sup> ruote nel 1427 ebbe f. — s. 10.

Ebbe di valsente nel 1451 disse indetto michele di francescho.

G<sup>o</sup> ruote f. 2 s. 12 d. 4.

Ebbe nel chatasto 1457 disse innandrea e maso suo fratello figlioli di detto michele f — s. 4.

ebbe nella ventina 1468 disse in andrea proprio sopra detto f — s. 5 d. 5.\*

*Sustanza.*

Una chasa p mio abitare posta nel popolo di  $\overline{\text{Sa}}$  ambruogo da prmo via sichondo rede di pagholo di domenicho  $\frac{1}{3}$  la chonpagnia del tenpio  $\frac{1}{4}$  monna mea donna fu di matteo del granaccio  $\frac{1}{5}$  piero gianni la quale o appigionata meza a nicholo di [lacuna] sta choglioficiali del monte damene di pigione lano f.  $8\frac{1}{2}$  la qual chasa e insul chanto a la charina f.  $8\frac{1}{2}$ .

*boche.*

Andrea di michele detto deta danni 33 — 200.

*beni alienati.*

Una chasa posta nel chastello di certaldo & in via malachodo che da prmo via da  $\frac{1}{2}$  antonio benizi d  $\frac{1}{3}$  giovanni amirata  $\frac{1}{4}$  via la quale s'apartenne a me avita.

Uno pezzi di terra luogho detto il poggio posta in detto chomune di certaldo che da prmo via  $\frac{1}{2}$  Stephano di binci  $\frac{1}{3}$  meo barbieri  $\frac{1}{4}$  istoldo de rossi.

Uno pezzo di terra posto in detto chomune luogho detto la strada che da prmo via  $\frac{1}{2}$  bartolo dantonio oste  $\frac{1}{3}$  peraccino di filipo  $\frac{1}{4}$  nicholaio di S. filippo e quali duo pezzi di terra e detta chasa vendè a michele di nanni bochaccini da certaldo

\* The "ventina" of 1468 was an extra tax imposed over and above the Catasto. The books recording the payments contain only a list of the contributors' names.

p pezzo e pregio in tutto f. 55 cioè fiorini cinquantacinque charta fatta p mano di S. girolamo di S. giovani da cholle notaio fiorentino.

Una chasa posta in detto chastello luogo detto il borgho co suo chonfini laquale vendè michele mio padre allazzero del fornaino da certaldo p prezho e pregio di fiorini quarantatre charta fatta p mano di S. baldassare di bartolomeo die deo da certaldo notaio.

Una chasa posta in firenze nel popolo di san nicholo oltrarno che da prmo via  $\frac{1}{2}$  antonio bastiere  $\frac{1}{3}$  labate di ripoli  $\frac{1}{4}$  il renaio drieto assanicholo nel quartiere di Sto spirito e chonfalone schala laqual chasa dette in dota a mona tita sua figliola e moglie di ghirigoro dandre chomandatore p pregio di fiorini sessanta charta fatta p mano di S. Andrea dantonio da castelfrancho notaio fiorentino.

Una chasa posta nel popolo di santo ambruogio di firenze laqual chonperò mio padre dalla chonpagnia del tenpio per pregio di fiorini 53 che da prmo via  $\frac{1}{2}$  nanni di pagholetto  $\frac{1}{3}$   $\frac{1}{4}$  detto michele la qual chasa dette in dota a mona appollonia sua figliola emoglie di pagholo di domenicho lanino in detto chofalon ruote charta fatta p mano di S. pagholo pagholi notaio fiorentino.

Uno pezzo di terra posta nel chomune di s. donnino cho suoj chonfini laqual dette michele mio padre in dota a mona tita sua figliola emoglie di ghirighoro dandrea chomandatore p pregio di fiorini 20 fune roghato S. Andrea di giovanni notaio.

Uno pezzo di terra posto nel chomune di certaldo luogo detto lavanella che da prmo via  $\frac{1}{2}$  S. bartolomeo di S. simone berti  $\frac{1}{3}$  guido boncani  $\frac{1}{4}$  il fiume dellelsa il quale vendè io andrea di michele sopradetto a S. bartolomeo di S. simone berti p pre di fiorini 45 cioè f. quarantacinque charta fatta cioè una iscritta di mia mano adetto S. bartolomeo f. 62 s. 3.

(Arch. di Stato di Firenze. S. 1470. C. 915. Gonfalone Ruote, a c. 19).

## III

## PORTALA AL CATASTO DEL 1480.

## GONFALONE RUOTE.

Andrea di michele scharpellatore a di chatasto nel 1470  
lire una e soldi quattro f — l. 1 s. 4.

a di sesto lire una soldi tre denari quattro f — l. 1 s. 3 d. 4.

*Sustanza.*

Una chasa posto nel popolo di santo ambruogio di firenze  
in sul chanto de la via dellagnuolo da prmo via  $\frac{1}{2}$  rede di  
pagholo di domenicho lanino terzo rede di piergianni  $\frac{1}{4}$  messer  
dietaiuti chalonico la qual chasa tiene da me a pigione  
giovanni di bartolommeo pizichagnuolo danne fiorini diciotto  
di sugiello.

*Incharichi.*

Tengho una chasa a pigione per mio abitare da messer  
ghuglielmo diachosso bischeri dane di pigione fiorini sedici di  
sugello.

*boche.*

Andrea di michele sopra detto deta danni quarantacinque.

*nipoti.*

ginevra figliola di ghorò chomandatore deta danni diciassette.

luchrezia figliola di detto ghorò deta danni quattordici.

michele figliuolo di detto ghorò deta danni dieci.

(Arch. di Stato di Firenze. Gonfalone Ruote. S. 1480,  
c. 1006, a c. 51.)

## IV

## TESTAMENT OF VERROCCHIO.

Venezia, 25 Giugno 1488.

In nomine dei—amen. Anno ab. incarnatione domini nostri Jesu Christi millésimo quadringentesimo ottuagesimo ottavo mensis iunii die vigesimo quinto indictione sexta. Cum omnibus sit eque moriendum et unicuique in vita sit hora mortis: ideo ego magister andreas quondam michaelis veroch [*sic*] de florentia, scultor, habitator venetiis in contrata santi marciliani, sanus pro gratia domini nostri Jesu Christi mente et intellectu, licet corpore languens, ad me vocare feci Franciscum malipedem notarium venetum,—ipsunque rogavi ut hoc meum scriberet testamentum, et post hobitum meum compleret et roboraret cum suis clausulis et additionibus necessariis et oportunis secundum stilum et consuetudinem civitatis venetiarum.

In primis quidem constituo meum commissarium et huius mei testamenti executorem Laurentium q. Andree de oderich, pictorem florentinum.

Corpus vero meum sepellire volo in cimiterio sancte marie ab ortho (si venetiis moriar) seu ubi videbitur dicto commissario meo, qui expendere debeat pro exequiis meis id quod sibi videbitur de meis benis.

Item celebrari volo missas sancte marie et sancti Gregorii pro anima mea.

Interrogatus a notario si quid de meis benis relinquere vellem hospitalibus christi pietatis sancte Marie de Nazareht et sancte marie graziarum: respondeo quod non.

Item omne id et totum quod dictus commissarius meus de meo exegit a quibuscunque debitoribus meis, et de meo administravit usque in presentem diem, sibi dimitto libere.

Item relinquo dicto Laurentio, commissario meo, totum

bronzium, stannum, porfida et mobilia et masseritia domus mee, quae omnia sunt florentiae, et etiam paria duo mantichorum.

Et item ei relinquo omnia et singula massaritia, vestes, lectus et omne aliud mobile meum, quod habeo venetiis.—

Et predicta omnia ei relinquo cum honore et conditionibus infrascriptis, videlicet: Et primo, quod facere debeat expensas sepulturae et exequiarum mearum, et celebrare facere dictas messas.

Item: quod dare debeat ducatos decem Zenobio, qui habet unam neptem nostram pro uxore, textori pannorum.

Item: quod dare debeat Zenevre, nepti mee uxori Ioannis botarii, Ducatos quinque.

Item: relinquo thome, fratri meo, duas meas domos, seu omnes meas domos, quas habeo in civitate florentie in populo Scti. Ambrosii.

Item: relinquo ipsi thome omnes pecunias, quas habere et exigere debeo ab officio mercantie florentine quacunque ratione et causa; de quibus pecuniis ordino quod faciat dotes filiabus suis.

Item: ordino, quod dictus thomas, frater meus, non possit vendere, pignorarare, nec aliquo modo alienare domos quas sibi ut supra reliqui, sed volo, quod ipse domos vadant de heredibus in heredes masculos, et, deficientibus masculis, dicte domus devenire debeant in feminas propinquiores eque equaliter, et equis portionibus. Residuum vero bonorum meorum, iurium et actionum presentium et futurorum, ubicunque locorum existentium, demitto ac relinquo predicto Laurentio, commissario meo.

Etiam relinquo opus equi per me principiati ad ipsum perficiendum, si placuerit ill<sup>mo</sup>. Duci Do. Venetiarum ducale dominium humiliter supplico, ut dignetur permittere dictum Laurentium perficere dictum opus, quia est sufficiens ad illud perficiendum.

Preterea dono et confero predicto commissario et residuario meo plenam virtutem et potestatem—commissariam meam intromittendi, regendi, gubernandi, administrandi et pro ea comparendi in omni inditio—defendendi, placitandi, petendi, exigendi, recipiendi pecunias, res et bona commissarie mee spectantia, de receptis quietandi, probandi, respondendi, excipiendi, opponendi, precepta et interdicta et terminos et delationes petendi, in animam meam iurandi, sententias et acta quelibet audiendi et fieri faciendi, exequendi, appellandi et persequendi, et omnia et singula alia faciendi, quae in predictis necessaria erunt et opportuna. Si quis autem contra hoc meum testamentum vie tentaverit, reficere debeat dicto commissario et residuario meo pro pena auri libras quinque, et hoc testamenti carta in sua permaneat firmitate. Signum autem suprascripti testamentoris qui hic fieri rogavit.

Io francesco di lorenzo dellopera, fiorentino, testimonio gurato et pregato scripsi.

Io sano di batista da firenze, libriero, testimonio gurato et pregatoscripsi.

Io angelo di girolamo dal cortivo testimonio iurato et pregato scripsi.

Ego franciscus Malipedis q. Stephani, brixienis venet. incola venet. notarius complevi et roboravi.

(Bib. Riccardiana a Firenze. Manoscritti No. 2713. Transcribed by Gaye, Cart. Ined. i. 367.)

## V

### INVENTORY OF TOMMASO VERROCCHIO.

(Presented Jan. 27, 1495 (N.S. 1496), by Tommaso, Verrocchio's younger brother, to the officers deputed by the rebels to value the Medici possessions after the expulsion of the family. The MSS. is not the original document, but a

copy by the hand of a public scribe, a duplicate made probably by the officers for their own use.)

Dj Tommaso Verrocchj. ✠ adj 27 dj gennaio 1495.

Rede dj Lorenzo de Medicj deon dare per questo lavoro fatto qui appie cioe.

- |                   |   |   |    |
|-------------------|---|---|----|
| Per a<br>Charegj. | { | 1. Per uno davitte e la testa dj ghulia . . . . .   | fj |
|                   |   | 2. Per lo gnudo rosso . . . . .   | fj |
|                   |   | 3. Per el bambino dj bronzo chon 3 teste dj<br>bronzo e 4 bocche dj liono dj marmo . . . . .                      | fj |
|                   |   | 4. Per una fighura dj marmo che gietta acqua . . . . .  | fj |
|                   |   | 5. Per una storia dj rilievo chom piu fighure . . . . .   | fj |
|                   |   | 6. Per achonciatura dj tutte le teste chotalic<br>che sono sopra a gli uscj del chortile in<br>Firenze . . . . .  | fj |
|                   |   | 7. Per uno quadro dj legname drentovj la<br>fighura della testa della Luchrezia de<br>Donatj . . . . .            | fj |
|                   |   | 8. Per lo stendardo per la giostra dj Lorenzo . . . . .   | fj |
|                   |   | 9. Per una dama dj rilievo ch' è posta in sul<br>elmo . . . . .   | fj |
|                   |   | 10. Per dipintura duno stendardo ch 1° spiri-<br>tello per la giostra dj Giuliano . . . . .                       | fj |
|                   |   | 11. Per la sepoltura dj Chosimo appie del altare<br>magiore in san Lorenzo . . . . .                              | fj |
|                   |   | 12. Per la sepoltura dj Piero e Giovannj de<br>Medici . . . . .   | fj |
|                   |   | 13. Per intagliatura dj 80 lettere intagliate in<br>su el serpentino in due tondj in detta<br>sepoltura . . . . . | fj |
|                   |   | 14. Per ventj maschere ritratte al naturale . . . . .   | fj |
|                   |   | 15. Per lo adornamento e aparato del ducha<br>Ghaleazo . . . . .  | fj |

(Arch. di Stato Firenze. Miscellanee Manoscritte. Vol. I.  
No. 3. Transcribed and published by Fabriczy. "Andrea

del Verrocchio al servizi de' Medici." Arch. Stor. dell' Arte.  
Ser. II. Anno I. Fasc. III.)

## VI

## THE BRONZE DAVID.

1476. 10 Maii. Operarii opere palatii deliberaverunt quod depositarius det et solvat Laurentio et Juliano Pieri Cosimo de Medicis flor. 150 largos pro pretio del davit, habiti ab eis deinde positi penes et apud hostium catenae pro ornamento et pulcritudine ac etiam magnificentia palati flor. 150 largos.  
(Gaye, Cart. Ined. i. 572.)

## VII

THE PALLA OF THE CUPOLA, DUOMO,  
FLORENCE.

## (1)

1468. 10 Settembre. Lo caverunt ad faciendum et fieri faciendum Andrea del Verocchio coè . . . detto Verocchio presente e conducente a fare la palla che s' à a porre in su la Lanterna in questo modo coè: d'otto pezzi secondo la forma del modello per lui dato el quale è nell' opera della grosexzza che è a presso a detti operai una parte, e l'altra à il detto Andrea; e tonda, e salda d'ariento, e in perfetione fornita; a misura di braccia quattro, meno l'altezza d'uno dito grosso. Abbiala a dorare, a ongni sua fatica; e l'opera gli à a dare l'ariento vivo e l'oro per dorare, e lire quaranta per ariento della saldatura vivo. Per pregio e nome di pregio di soldi 30 per ciascuna libra della palla; a suo rame, e ongni altra spese e fatica. E perchè à fare alla detta palla una armadua di rame, che essendo per insino a libre 500, abbia della libra soldi 16; e passando detto peso di libre 500 in su, abbia a

esser paghato per rame. E più à fare uno colaretto con uno cannone, di getto di brozzo, che à entrare nel bottone e nella palla; el quale s' à a legare coll' armadua; a bronzo dell' opera, e ongni fatica e maestero senza ingnuno costo e spese d'Opera, ma ongni spesa di detto Andrea; el quale debba avere conpiuto in perfetione per di qui a mesi 4. E debba sodare per sofficienti mallevadori d'oservare quanto di sopra si contiene; e in caso che detta palla non venissi o no riuscissi come di sopra si dice, sodisfare l'opera d'ongni e qualunque spesa e danno; e più di paghare quello e quanto sarà dichiarato pegli operai che in tenpi saranno. E ongni armadua avessi avere, debba avere el ferro lavorato dell' Opera, et detto Andrea l'abbia aconciare nella palla. El quale Andrea, udite tutte le preditte cose, a quelle ratifichò.

(Arch. di S. Maria del Fiore. L.D. III. a c. 76 f°.)

(2)

1468. 2 dec. Actendentes ad quandam locationem verbotemus factam per operarios &c Johanni Bartholomei intagliatore e Bartholomeo Fruosini aurificho cuiusdam bottonis rame e ottone, quod debet poni in Lacterna &c et intellecto ipsum bottonem esse completum: et volentes solvere et eisdem dare mercedem dicti bottonis quia fuit locatum dicto Johanni pro pretio quod per operarios, qui pro tempore fuerunt, fuerit deliberatum; et advertendo ad dictam locationem, miserunt per plures magistros &c Dicti magistri simul congregati dederunt in scriptis, quilibet eorum de per se, pretium sibi debendum &c in hunc modum, videlicet:

Io Lucha di Simone della Robbia gudicho che debbano avere fiorini 60 del bottone, per insino dove è condotto di bono maestro.

Io Andrea del Verochio gudicho quello medeximo.

Io Antonio del Polaiolo gudicho che debbano avere fiorini 70 di loro manifattura.

Io Bancho di Filippo, orafo, gudicho ch' abbino avere di loro fatica per insino dove è condotto il bottone fiorini ottanta &c.

(L. D. III. a c. 78.)

(3)

1469. 29 marzo. Fecerunt infrascriptas promissiones videlicet: che in vece e nome della detta opera fanno e promettono a Piero di Cosimo de' Medici e conpangni, banchieri, che ongni volta che Andrea del Verocchio orafo arà ricevuto qualunque quantità di danari per insino alla somma di fiorini dugento, per fare o vero fare fare la palla che à stare in su la Lanterna; della quale quantità ne facci detto Andrea avere fiorini cenventi dare e paghare a detto Piero detta quantità per insino in detti fiorini 200 e non più, senza ingnuna exceptione.

(L. D. III. a c. 84 f°.)

(Transcribed and published by Cesare Guasti. "La Cupola di S. Maria del Fiore." Firenze. 1857.)

## VIII

### THE BRONZE CANDELABRA.

(1)

29 Junii. 1468. A Andrea di Michele del Verrocchio intagliatore si paga fiorini 8 a conto d'un candelabro di bronzo, che egli haveva cominciato per la sala dell' audienza; il restante dev' essere fissato da Niccola di Messer Verri de' Medici

(Arch. delle Ritormagioni di Firenze. Provis. filza 161. Transcribed by Gaye, i. 569.)

(2)

23 Sept. 1469. A Andrea del Verrocchio si paghi fiorini 40 per un candelabro lavorato e scolpito a similitudine di certo vaso.

(Gaye, i. 570.)

(3)

20 April, 1480. Andrea Michaelis Verrochi flor. 3 larghos sunt pro saldatura candelabri bronzi, quod star in cappella andientie dominorum.

(Gaye, i. 575.)

## IX

LETTER FROM GIOVANNI TORNABUONI TO  
LORENZO DEI MEDICI

24 Sep. 1477.

CARISSIMO MIO LORENZO,—Son tanto oppresso da passione e dolore per l'acerbissimo e inopinato chaso della mia dolcissima sposa che io medesimo non so dove mi sia. La quale, chome avrai inteso ieri, chome piacqui a Dio a hore xxij sopra parto passò di questa presente vita, e la creatura, sparata lei, gli chavamo di chorpo morta, che m'è stato anchora doppio dolore. Son certissimo che per la tua solita pietà avendomi chompassione marai per ischusato s'io non ti scrivo a longo, e non ti do aviso alchuno, che non ho avuto tempo nè modo a poterlo fare, ristorerotti pel primo. Rachomandarmi a ñ Lucretia e a ñ Clarice e a Giuliano che non scrivo loro altrimenti per non potere pregoti fare chon loro la schusa mia, e a te mi racomando. Iddio ti guardi. In Roma a di xxiiij di Sett. 1477.

Ho in questo punto havute le tue a che non posso scriverti altrimenti. Sforzeromi farlo per lo prime e circa 'l fatto per il fratello di Ser Nicolo farò quanto mi sarà possibile.

(*On the back.*) Magnifico viro. Lorenzo de Medici in Firenze.

(*In another handwriting.*) 1477 da Giovanni Tornab. a di 24 di settembre.

(Transcribed and published by Reumont. Cited by Ridolfi. Arch. Stor. Italiani, 1890.)

## X

THE RELIEF FOR THE SILVER ALTAR OF  
S. GIOVANNI

## (1)

24 luglio 1477. Si da autorità a Consoli e ufficiali di mosaico di allogare far fare compire e fornire l'altare d'Ariento di S. Gio. Batta cioè le due teste al Dossale nel modo e forma che sta al pres<sup>e</sup> el dossale con quattro storie che vi mancono cioè in verso la Porta del Battesimo Due storie che sieno l'Annunziatione la Natività e il Parto Compartite le d<sup>e</sup> due storie secondo il disegno et il modello che si faranno la 3<sup>a</sup> che riguarda verso l'opa di S. Gio : la cena, la Donzella che balla e quando gl'è tagliata la testa di S. Gio. Bat<sup>a</sup>: adornate tutte le quattro storie con figure di più che mezzo rilievo e faccino che sieno finito per tutto Aprile 1478, &c. . . .

## (2)

2 Agosto 1477. Paghisi f. 6. a Verrocchio orefice per due storie fatte per lui per fare le teste del Dossale dell' Altare della Chiesa di S. Gio : con il modello a similitudine de quale si dovevano fare d<sup>e</sup> storie et i d<sup>i</sup> modelli dovevano rimanere all' opa di S. Gio.

## (3)

13 gen<sup>o</sup>. Bernardo di Bartolomeo di Cenni orefice faccia la storia dell' Annunziazione et Andrea di Michele del Ver-

rocchio faccia la storia della Decollazione di S. Gio. Bat<sup>a</sup>  
Antonio d' Jachopo del Pollaiuolo faccia la storia della  
Natività et Antonio di Salvi e Fran<sup>o</sup> di Gio. compagni faccino  
la storia del convito di S. Gio. bat<sup>a</sup>.

(4)

1480. Andrea del Verrocchio scultore finisce la storia del  
Dossale d'ariento la quale pesò libbre 30. 4. per la quale in  
tutto se li pagò f. 397. 21. 1.

(Archives of S. Maria del Fiore. Transcribed and published  
by Franceschini. "Il Dossale d'Argento del Tempio di S.  
Giovanni in Firenze." Firenze, 1894.)

## XI

### THE GROUP OF OR S. MICHELE

(The more important documents only are quoted. For the  
rest the following dates are cited by Gaye and others.)

29 March 1463. Deliberation of the Università dei  
Mercatanti to place a statue in the Tabernacle of Or S.  
Michele.

15 Jan. 1466 (N.S. 1467). Payment to Verrocchio of  
300 Lire piccole.

30 March 1468. The Università binds itself to pay  
twenty-five lire a month to Verrocchio.

2 Aug. 1470. An order issued that the metal for casting  
the statues should be weighed.

1476-1480. Records of frequent payments.

20 Dec. 1486. A mass is ordered to be celebrated on the  
Feast of S. Thomas. In this document the statues are men-  
tioned as already collocated in the Tabernacle.

(1)

22 April 1483. Informati i magnifici et exc. Signori S. Priori di libertà et gonfaloniere di giustitia per ricordo de' sei consiglieri della mercantia et operai creati per le figure di Cristo e di San Tommaso, lavorate e che si lavorano per Andrea del Verocchio, degno scultore, per locharle et mecterle nel tabernaculo del oratorio d'orto S. Michele a honore di dio e per ornamento della nostra città, et le quali col parere di savi cittadini si principiorno, et quasi sono conducte alla loro intera perfectione; ma restasi a fare el dovere al decto Andrea pel suo magisterio, el quale, benchè potesse chiedere a similitudine dell' altre figure poste in decto oratorio, le quali non sono di tanta perfectione, nientedimeno, ateso a temporali e maggior copia di tali scultori, si può stimare caleranno assai di stimatione et pregio a comparatione dell' altre predecite, et di già chi nà voluto intendere qualche opinione non lo trova molto discosto dal' onesto, perchè havendone infino a oggi pel sua magisterio et parte di sua faticha havuti fiorini 306 larghi, offera, che havendone quello manca insino in fiorini 400 larghi di contanti et al presente, darle fornite et perfecte di qualunque chosa, et poste in decto tabernaculo innanzi alla festa di S. Giovanni baptista px. futuro; et per ogni resto vorrebbe per sua faticha passare altri fiorini 400 larghi, ma farne qualche dilatione et tempo. Deliberarono che i decti sei consiglieri insieme co' decti operai possino esaminare con decto andrea, et chi parrà loro, el prezo congruo per magisterio di decte figure non passando in modo alcuno fiorini 800 larghi in tutto, computati e decti 306 già pagati; et non gli potendo pagare quello, montasino oltre a detti quattrocento di sopra nominati, tra gli avuti et quello ha havere al presente in minore tempo danni 4 proxime futuri, et organno la quarta parte del resto.

(Arch. delle Riformagioni di Firenze, provvisioni filza 176. Gaye i. 371.)

(2)

24 Dic. 1487. Andreae del Verrocchio satisfiat (non potendo passare la somma di fiorini dugento di sugello per ogni resto) et de dictis pecuniis fiant dotes duabus neptibus suis ; per conto delle figure già più anni passati per lui lavorate et perfecte non è stato interamente pagato di sua fatica et premio, allegando peso di gran famiglia et assai povertà, maxime di molte fanciulle foemine, et senza dote, di thommaso di michele, textore di drappi suo fratello, costituito in extrema miseria.

(Arch. delle Riformagioni di Firenze, provvis. filza, 180. Gaye i. 371.)

## XII

## THE FORTEGUERRI TOMB

(1)

7 Marzo 1477 (N.S. 1478).

vii Martii 1477. Convocati &c havendo insieme tractato et veduta l'auctorità alloro concessa per dco. consiglio per fare la sepoltura o vero memoria del reverendissimo Cardinale de Thyano, date et messo il partito in per fave 10 nere, nessuna bianca in contrario existente, per vigore di dca auctorità et balià et per ogni miglior modo per tempo et termine di dua anni prox. fut. impuosono, et posto essere volleno a ciaschuna gabella che per lavenire si venderà et incanterà per dco. comune di pistoia quatrino uno per ciaschuna lira di compra et prezzo di ciaschuna, &c &c.

(Deliberazioni ed Atti del 1474-1485. Gaye, i. 258.)

(2)

Autograph Letter from the Operai di S. Jacopo in Pistoja to Lorenzo dei Medici.

11 Marzo 1477 (N.S. 1478).

Magnifice Vir e benefactor nr singularissime post debit recommendat. Nelle cose occorrenti ci bisogna afaticare la V.M.; et questo siè che doppo la morte della buona memoria di Monsignor di Thyano, nostro dilectissimo compatriota per memoria della sua Reverendissima S. e per benefitii ricevuti questa Ciptà da lui, parve qui alla comunità fare demonstratione, et per n<sup>ri</sup> consigli fu ottenuto per sua Sepoltura et memoria si dovesse spendere lire mille cento e commisse a noi Ciptadini che facessimo fare modelli, et quelli facti si presentassero al consiglio, et quello il consiglio elegiesse, si dovesseprehendere. Il perchè al consiglio fu presentati cinque modelli, fra quali nenera uno dandrea del varrocchio, il quale piaceva più che altro; et il consiglio dè commissione a noi, dovessimo praticare di pregio con dco. Andrea. Ilchè facemo, et lui ci chiese ducati trecento cinquanta, et inteso noi la chiesta sua li demo licentia, et nulla saldamo seco; perchè non avevamo commessione spendere più che lire mille cento. Et di poi desiderandosi per noi che dca. opera avesse effecto, ricorrimo al consiglio, dicendo che bisognava magior quantità di denari a questa opera che lire mille cento, volendo una cosa degnia. Il consiglio inteso il vero nuovamente diliberò, et diecci auctorità potessimo spendere quella quantità di denari ci paresse per dca. opera, perchè fusse bella, et potessimo allogarla a dco. andrea et a ogni altro che ci paresse. Il perchè noi intendendo essere qui piero del pollaiuolo fumo seco, et preg-hamolo ci dovesse fare modello di tale opera; il che ci promesse fare, et per questo abbiamo diferito ad alogare dca. opera. Ora è seguito che enostri M. Commissari, per fare che dca. opera avesse effecto, lanno allogata al dco. andrea per dco. pregio et modo; et noi, come figliuoli dubidientia, a questa et a ogni altra cosa che loro facessino et deliberasseno, sempre staremo contenti et ubidienti: et così alloro nabbiamo scripto. Ora piero del pollaiuolo à facto il modello che per

noi li fu imposto; il quale ci pare più bello et più dengnio darte et più piace a contento di mess. piero fratello di dco. Monsignore et di tucta la sua famiglia, et simul di noi et di tucti e ciptadini della nra. ciptà, che lanno veduto, che non fa quello dandrea o dalcuno altro, et per questo abbiamo preghato decti commissari, che se paga loro usare alchuna cortesia a dco. andrea, et pigliare quello di dco. piero, ciò ne farebbero contento et piacere assai. Ora à voi, come a nro protectore, mandiamo e decti modelli, perchè di simile cose et dogni altra navete pienissima intelligentia, et siamo certi desiderate l'honore di decto Monsignore et sua famiglia et di tucta la nra. Ciptà; che essendo vero quello ci pare, ci prestate il vro. aiuto et favore al nro. desiderio, che non intende ad altro che allo honore della Ciptà, et alla memoria di dco. Monsignore. Bene valete. Ex pistorio die xi. Martii, 1477.

Vri servidori Operari di San Jacopo offitiali della Sapiencia et Ciptadini electi pel consiglio sopra dca. opera in pistoia.

Magnifico viro Laurentio de Medicis benefactori nostro precipuo florentie.

(Arch. Med. Famiglia privata Lettere. Filza 35. Gaye, Cart. Ined. i. 256.)

The answer of Lorenzo has not yet been found. On March 17, 1477. (N.S. 1478), the Operai again wrote thanking him "della humana lettera et risposta fattaci sopra i disegni e modelli della memoria del R<sup>mo</sup> Cardinale ditiano; e chonosciamo che chome persone pocho experte volevamo dare Suditio di quelle cose, di che non avavame molto experientia," &c . . .

(3)

17 Genraio 1511.

Alogorno e concederono a M<sup>o</sup> lorenzo figliolo di lodovico di guglielmo di buono a rifare, ridurre, e finire detta sepultura di do. R<sup>me</sup> Cardinale et suo ornato . . . Laquale sepultura

promesse decto M<sup>o</sup> lorenzo in decti modi e nomi rifare rasset-  
tare, ridurre e finire di marmi buoni e belli bianchi di carrara,  
in quel modo e forma come è disegnato in uno certo modello.  
. . . In el quale modello sono e anno a essere da piè di decta  
sepultura dua bambini di marmo con dua arme d'epso Card<sup>e</sup> et  
dua agnoletti da chapo con dua candeglieri di sopra al cor-  
nicione di marmo; item di nuovo promesse fare la figura di do  
Cardinale et la carità esistente sopra epso Cardinale a bellezza  
ragguaglio, perfectione corrispondentia del altre figure al  
presente esistenti in decta sepultura.

(Quoted by Beani. "Notizie Storiche su Niccolò Forte-  
guerri, Cardinale di Teano," p. 124.)

### XIII

#### THE MADONNA AND SAINTS, PISTOIA.

Nov. 1485.

Fu per li executori del testamento della felice memoria di  
Mons. Nostro Donato de Medici vostro degnissimo Vescovo,  
prestantissimi consiglieri allogato a fare una tavola da altare a  
Andrea del Verrocchio da Firenze per l' altare dell' oratorio  
della Vergine di piazza: la quale si dice esser facta o mancarvi  
pocho, et è più di sei anni l' harebbe finita se da detti  
executori havesse avuto interamente el debito suo: che ne  
resta havere l. 253 che havuto per insino alla somma di fl. 60  
larghi. Dicesi essere una bellissima cosa e conducta a quel  
termine che v' è con grandi arti; et venendo non sarebbe se  
non a honore et ornamento della vostra città e accrescimento  
di devotione di quel luogo. Et come sanno ogni giorno le  
prestantie vostre fanno elemosina ad altri: sieno contenti  
questa volta farla a se medesimo perocchè detto oratorio è  
dell' op. vostra di sant. Jacopo et immediate sottoposto al  
ghoverno di quella e non d' altri proverete che detta tavola

vengha. Il perchè sia riformato e vinto che e' presenti opera habbino auctorità di vedere se dicta tavola è secondo la scripta e disegno in quella dato et non essendo finita farla finire et bisognando pagare a dicto Andrea al presente d quello si sta havere per insino alla somma di fl. sei larghi gli paghino della massa di detta opera mettendo acconto di dicto Andrea; et ogni suo resto promettino et obblighino l' opera a pagarli per tutto el mese d'ottobre proximo advenire. Et sieno tenuti a farla venire et pervenuta che sarà, a farla porre al luogo pio, pagando l'opera vectura et gabelle secondo eran tenuti detti executori: et quando perciò pagasseno come è detto sia adnesso da loro ragioni.

Die 21 Novembre firmata fn. 10.

Die 22 Novembre comprobata fn. 17.

Die 25 Novembre in consilio obtenta fn. 69, fl. 9.

(Arch. di Pistoia, 684, Cod. 68. Transcribed and published by Chiti. "Andrea del Verrocchio in Pistoja." *Bullettino Storico Pistoiese*. Anno. ii. Fasc. i. 49.)

#### XIV

#### THE COLLEONI STATUE.

LETTER FROM ANTONIO DI MONTECATINI, FERRARESE AMBASSADOR AT FLORENCE TO ERCOLE D'ESTE, DUKE OF FERRARA.

12 luglio, 1481.

Ill<sup>me</sup> princeps ex<sup>me</sup> que dux et domine domine mi Singularissime. . . .

Uno maestro el quale voria atore a fare bartolamio da bergamo in su uno corsiero ha facto uno cavallo naturale di stracie che e bella fantasia teme nel passare ad andare a Vinesia non le sij facto pagare la gabella pregami ne scriva due parole a Vostra ex<sup>tia</sup> le sij raccomandato che questo non e

mercantia questa monstra cusi lo racomando a quella. Et  
 venera a Vostra ex<sup>tia</sup> a mostrarlo ali piedi dela quale mi  
 raccomando. Florencie, adi xij di luio 1481,

Eiusdem Ex<sup>me</sup> ducalis dominationis Vestre

Seruus fidelissimus,

ANTONIUS DE MONTECHATINI.

Outside: Illustriss<sup>mo</sup> principi ex<sup>me</sup> que duci et domino  
 domino Herculi estensi duci ferrarie, &c.

Se. lige ducumtenenti ge. domino meo Singulari. Cito  
 ferrarie.

(Arch. di Stato Modena. Cancellaria ducale. Cart. degli  
 Ambasciatori Estensi a Firenze. Transcribed and published  
 by Venturi, Arch. Stor. dell' Arte, 1894, p. 54.)

Andrea emigrale difunneſſe con empoſuo  
fratello. Eſſe alſimo chaſto emugela difun  
neſſe emona ghera ſua madre

Bog

Jo andrea danni — 21

Donna nonna mea matrigna dani — 56

Jo maſo — danni — 16

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